

Egypt demands clarification from Qatar as row deepens

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak asked Qatar for clarification after it accused Egypt of involvement in a 1996 bid to topple the Qatari government, press reports said Monday.

"Foreign Minister Amr Mousa has summoned the Qatari ambassador in Cairo and asked him to clarify his government's position within 48 hours," Mr. Mubarak said, according to the pro-government evening daily Al-Masara.

A war of words broke out between Egypt and Qatar over Cairo's criticism of the Middle East economic conference which Doha hosted earlier this month.

The forum was boycotted by most Arab countries, including regional key power brokers Egypt and Saudi Arabia, because of Israel's participation.

Before the Nov. 16-18 forum opened Qatar suggested that Egypt backed the February 1996 coup.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassem Thani said an Egyptian press campaign against Doha in the weeks preceding the conference was "aimed at Qatar particularly after the failure of the coup."

Sheikh Hamad later said that Egypt's calls to cancel the forum were concerned with "settling scores."

President Mubarak denied any Egyptian role in the failed bid to topple the Qatari government and said two Egyptians suspected of involvement were "retired army officers who had temporary work contracts with the Qatari government."

The war of words intensified with Mr. Mousa saying on Wednesday that Egypt "would not let pass insults" from Qatar.

"I will not comment on the insults, but we will react [to them]," Mr. Mousa said.

On Saturday Qatar again levelled charges against Egypt, accusing Cairo of forcing the cancellation of a meeting between the six Gulf Cooperation Council

(GCC) states, Egypt and Syria that was scheduled to take place in Doha in December.

"Egypt has used pressure against Arab countries to boycott the Doha conference and now it is trying to prevent the staging in Qatar of a meeting of the Damascus Declaration countries," Qatar's official daily Al-Raya reported.

A Gulf diplomat said last week that the meeting of the eight countries — which were united in opposing Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait — was to be postponed until late December or early January because of the row.



SHEIKH YASSIN LEADS PROTEST: Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin is carried by assistants during a demonstration by Palestinian women calling for the release of their sons from Israeli jails Monday. More than 4,000 Palestinian prisoners are in the Israeli jails (Reuters photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

France to press Israel to respect accords

TEL AVIV (AFP) — French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine arrived here Monday for a visit during which he is expected to press Israeli leaders to move the peace process forward by respecting agreements with the Palestinians, officials said. The visit by Mr. Vedrine, his first to the region since the new French government came to power in June, comes against a backdrop of mounting concern in Europe at the persistent deadlock in the Middle East peace process. Straight after his arrival, the French foreign minister had a working lunch with his Israeli counterpart, David Levy. That was due to be followed by meetings with several Israeli politicians, including opposition leader Ehud Barak.

Hamas slams Israel for 'terrorism'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) accused Israel on Monday of "terrorism" for its determination to expand Jewish settlements in Arab east Jerusalem and for attacks in Lebanon. "The series of Zionist terrorism continues in occupied east Jerusalem and south Lebanon, targeting civilians and breaking all human values and international norms," Hamas said in a statement received by AFP. Hamas accused Israel of "stepping up the pace of settlement activity in the heart of Jerusalem and threatening further confiscations and large-scale expulsions" of Palestinians.

'German-born man strangled in Algeria'

PARIS (Agencies) — Hooded attackers strangled to death a German-born separatist at his home in Algeria, an Algerian newspaper said on Monday. The attackers broke into the man's home, gagged his Algerian wife and killed him. The attack took place on Saturday in Ain El Hajar town in Saïda province, 340 kilometres southwest of Algiers, said Al Watan, quoting security officials. The victim was named as Mohammed Amine Hoffman, a German who settled in Algeria in 1952 when he left the French Foreign Legion and married an Algerian woman. He converted to Islam 36 years ago, the newspaper said.

Iran authorities close office of dissident cleric

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian authorities have closed an office of a dissident Shiite Muslim cleric after he challenged the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a newspaper reported Monday. A special court for the clergy ordered the closure of the office belonging to Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri and the seizure of its property in the holy city of Mashhad in northeastern Iran, the conservative Qods daily said. The paper also recalled threats by Ali Razini, head of a special tribunal for clerics, to investigate Ayatollah Montazeri after he raised questions about the constitution.

500,000 illegal foreigners leave S. Arabia

DUBAI (R) — More than half a million foreigners violating Saudi Arabia's immigration laws have left the kingdom since a three-month amnesty which expired last month was announced, Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef said. Prince Nayef said another 300,000 illegal foreigners took advantage of the grace period which expired on Oct. 17 to legalise their stay in the country. "His Highness said the result of the campaign was the departure of more than 500,000 people living in the country illegally," the official Saudi press agency reported.

Netanyahu aides to present today new peace ideas to Egypt

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Senior aides to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will travel to Cairo Tuesday to try to garner Egyptian support for new proposals to break the stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Mr. Netanyahu's office said Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh and diplomatic advisor Uzi Arad would meet in Cairo with Osama Baz, President Hosni Mubarak's top advisor.

A brief government statement said the talks would be "a continuation" of a telephone conversation last week between Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Mubarak.

After the phone call President Mubarak said Mr. Netanyahu had told him to expect a "new proposal" from Israel in the coming days to break the months-long deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

Earlier Monday Mr. Netanyahu's office confirmed that the government was willing to transfer a modest amount of additional West Bank territory to the Palestinians as required under interim peace accords and to slow down Jewish settlement

building in disputed areas.

In exchange, Israel will demand that the Palestinians enter into accelerated negotiations on a final peace agreement and forego further Israeli troop withdrawals from the West Bank until the negotiations are complete.

Mr. Netanyahu had refused to budge on either the troop withdrawal or settlement issue for months, saying Israel would only take such steps if the Palestinians took tougher action against armed militants.

The Palestinians have already rejected an insufficient 8-10 per cent of additional West Bank land Israel appears willing to hand over at this stage of the peace negotiations.

But Palestinian Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath said the Palestinians were willing to discuss "serious" pullback proposals from Israel.

Interim peace accords require Israel to withdraw by mid-1998 from all of the West Bank, except for Jewish settlements and military zones. Palestinians say this should put at least 90 per cent of the territory under their control.

Justice denied by Saudi court system, Amnesty report charges

AMMAN (J.T.) — "You are arrested for political activities without a warrant, thrown into a cell for years without a trial, and tortured under signing a confession. If you are lucky enough to get a trial, it will be held behind closed doors and you won't see a lawyer. If you are accused of a serious crime, you could be executed at a moment's notice, be lashed or have your limbs amputated."

"This is the reality faced

by many people caught in the web of the Saudi Arabian justice system, where even the most basic right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty does not exist," Amnesty International said today. The justice system is blatantly unfair from start to finish — from the time someone is arrested to the end of their trial.

In a report to be released today (Nov. 25) under the title "Behind Closed Doors:

Unfair Trials in Saudi Arabia," Amnesty International reports how such a system has encouraged arbitrary arrest and detention of political suspects, and facilitated the widespread use of torture, flogging, amputation and executions.

"When the two British nurses, Deborah Parry and Lucille McLaughlan, were given access to lawyers before their trial began, we hoped that this would set a precedent for defendants

throughout Saudi Arabia to have the opportunity of legal defence. This, however, has not been the case," Amnesty International said. While the two nurses' case was being scrutinised by international media for almost a year at least 117 people whose cases were shrouded in secrecy were executed during this same period.

"Most of those executed were foreign workers from developing countries as

well as other vulnerable sectors. They included Soleha Anam Kudiran, a 30-year-old Indonesian maid, whose death sentence was secretly ratified in August by a royal decree. She was secretly executed a month later while the nurses' case was in the public eye. Along with the other 116 executed she did not have access to lawyers at any stage of her trial," Amnesty said.

"No one, save the govern-

ment of Saudi Arabia, knows how many people are awaiting execution in Saudi Arabian jails, but they include Sarah Dematera, a 24-year-old Filipino national, who was convicted of murdering her employer in 1992. They could also include a group of Pakistani nationals, including women, who have been held in secret on drug offences, punishable by death."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10 Sandokan
14:30 C.R.O.
15:00 Skippy
15:30 The Album Show
16:30 Square One T.V.
17:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 You Bet Your Life
20:00 Doc. — Skeleton Coast
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Hollywood Remembers
22:00 News in English
22:30 Margaret Volant
23:15 The Guilty

PRAYER TIMES

04:47 Fajr
06:08 (Sunrise) Doha
11:22 Dhuhur
14:13 'Asr
16:37 Maghreb
17:58 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel.
661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel.
622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775361.

St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751.

Amman International Church
Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 843457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Skies will be cloudy to partly

cloudy with a chance of scattered showers, and winds southerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly moderate to active and seas rough.

Amman 10/19
Aqaba 15/27
Deserts 06/20
Jordan Valley 16/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 20, Aqaba 27 Humidity
readings: Amman 32 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Khalil Al-Touq 757253
Dr. Wafiq Qadumi 893542
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 830432
Dr. Bahjat Bader 832642
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 641945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi T'ameh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Nabhan 995743
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre
813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Al-Khaleel Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital
602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Dept 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs

661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 0853200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

EMERGENCIES

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre
813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Al-Khaleel Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
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HOSPITALS

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Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 0853200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15 Sanaa (RJ)
07:25 Damascus (RJ)
09:25 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
10:05 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:05 Beirut (RJ)
10:15 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
14:20 Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)

17:15 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 London, Frankfurt (RJ)

Other Flights

14:35 Istanbul (TK)
14:40 Munich (YP)
16:30 Rome (AZ)
16:45 Tunis, Damascus (add) (TU)
18:30 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
20:00 Tel Aviv (LY)
20:10 Beirut (ME)
20:40 Cairo (MS)
22:20 London (BA)
23:35 Amsterdam (KL)
23:35 Larnaca (CY)

08:25 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:15 Vienna, Brussels (RJ)
12:00 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:10 Paris (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)
12:30 Cairo (RJ)
12:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
19:30 Jeddah (RJ)
19:30 Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
20:20 Larnaca (RJ)
20:40 Damascus (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
04:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

02:25 Amsterdam (KL)
03:00 Athens (OA)
15:40 Munich (YP)
15:45 Istanbul (TK)
17:30 Rome (AZ)
17:45 Tunis (add) (TU)
19:30 Dubai (EK)
21:20 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:40 Cairo (MS)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

06:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
08:15 Aqaba (RW)
09:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
17:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
17:55 Tel Aviv (RW)
20:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
21:50 Aqaba (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20 Beirut (RJ)
07:25 Aqaba (add) (RJ)

Handicapped children participate in festival to mark King's birthday

AMMAN (Petra) — Handicapped children from 12 centres sponsored by the Ministry of Social Development and the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped Monday held a festival in which they presented folklore activities as their contribution to the country's celebration of His Majesty King Hussein's 62nd birthday.



Children participating in the festival sponsored by the Ministry of Social Development perform the national dance, while Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Japanese Ambassador Takayuki Kimura look on (Petra photo)

At the festival, which was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamser, and other officials, the children sang national songs, performed the dabkeh national dance, and took part in competitions.

HRH Prince Firas, the King's health secretary, opened the celebration by thanking all the public and private organisations that have been contributing to the rehabilitation of the handicapped children.

Since its establishment in 1981, the federation has succeeded in creating 12 clubs featuring special facilities and equipment and sports halls for handicapped children around the country, Prince Firas stated.

Large numbers of handicapped children benefit from these facilities under the supervision of experts, he said, noting that one of the Jordanian handicapped athletes won a silver medal in the 1996 Olympics held in Atlanta in the U.S.

Cabinet approves retirement of civil servants under provisions of plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Monday approved requests by 89 civil servants for retirement under the provisions of a government plan to encourage retirement by employees who have completed the minimum number of years in public service.

A statement after the session said the 89 have decided to resign to benefit from the offer, which gives them five annual increments altogether to be added to their salaries before their service ends.

The pension in this case will be calculated on the total aggregate, according to the statement. The government has said the offer was intended to give employees a chance to work for the private sector or seek jobs abroad.

However, the government will only approve requests for retirement upon the recommendation of the concerned minister and depending on whether these employees are still needed for their present jobs.

Nuclear technology in water resource management examined at meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Consultative Committee of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Monday opened a four-day meeting in Amman to discuss the employment of nuclear technology in the management of water resources.

The meeting is being held at the Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA), which is affiliated with the World Health Organisation (WHO), and is attended by delegates from seven Middle Eastern nations, including Jordan.

The delegates are scheduled to discuss research activities in the water sector that were sponsored by the IAEA in the Near East region over the past decade, as well as the requirements for developing this sector.

The meeting will refer recommendations in this respect to the Vienna-based IAEA with requests for support to the participating countries' national programmes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

German book expo opens at UJ

AMMAN (Petra) — A book exhibition featuring works by German authors was opened Monday at the University of Jordan. The exhibition, which was organised by the Goethe Institute and the Faculty of Engineering, includes almost 175 topics covering architectural engineering.

Rain predicted for today

AMMAN (Petra) — Heavy rain showers are expected today, according to Meteorology Department sources. They said the weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy with thunderstorms in different parts of the Kingdom. Winds will be southeasterly moderate to active.

Donors to Al Amal Centre honoured

AMMAN (Petra) — The executive council of the General Union For Vol-

untary Societies (GUVS) Monday honoured 63 donors at Al Amal Cancer Centre for their assistance to the centre. They were presented with certificates of appreciation for their supportive efforts and voluntary work. Attending the ceremony was Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamser.

Mu'tah U. to hold population workshop today

MU'TAH (Petra) — Mu'tah University is scheduled to hold a workshop today on the population in Jordan. The seminar is organised by the General Statistics Department and the United Nations and will discuss three working papers on population, family relations, and the economy.

Arab Youth Forum holds meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Youth Forum (AYF) Monday held a meeting in which the forum's coming activi-

ties were discussed. Of the group's membership, 150 people decided to campaign by the end of this month.

Gazans allowed to use King Hussein Bridge

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department (PSD) sources Monday announced that Gazans are allowed to enter and exit Jordan via the King Hussein Bridge on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays of each week. The PSD sources said the bridge will be open for them from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Japanese delegation visits RSS

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Monday visited the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and met with acting President Seyfidin Muaz. The delegation members were briefed on RSS activities and duties to the local community.

WHAT'S GOING ON

MEDIA FORUM

* "Media Forum" (in Arabic) at the American Center auditorium, Abdoun, at 4:00 p.m. (Panelists Hakam Khair, formerly secretary general of the 12th Parliament and currently spokesman of the National Constitutional Party and Dr. Sari Naser, professor of sociology at the University of Jordan. Mr. Hakam Khair will discuss the political composition of the newly-elected Parliament and Dr. Sari Naser will share his insights on the social and cultural implications of the 13th Parliament's composition).

WORLD DIALOGUE

* United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Bill Richardson, will participate in a live Worldnet television interview at the American Center auditorium, Abdoun, at 5:00 p.m. (Ambassador Richardson will answer questions from journalists in London, Amman and Ankara on the United States' policy on Iraq. The Jordanian journalists who will question Richardson will be Ms. Suzanne Afaneh of Jordan Television and Ms. Caroline Faraj of Al Ra'i daily).

FILM

* "Ryan's Daughter" at the British Council, Jabbal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

FIFTH JORDANIAN THEATRE FESTIVAL

* Two plays entitled "Yarma" and "Live in Autumn" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., respectively.

TWELFTH ITALIAN FILM WEEK

* Two films entitled "La bionda" (The Blonde) and "L'amico immaginario" (The Imaginary Friend), with subtitles in English, at Samir Al Rifa'i auditorium, University of Jordan at 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., respectively.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR/CHOIR

* Annual Christmas charity bazaar by the American Union of Amman at the Marriott Hotel on Friday, Nov. 28 (11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.).

* Annual Christmas classical choir at the Royal Cultural Centre on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday (3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th Dec. '97) at 8:00 p.m.

BOOK EXHIBITION

* 10th Annual Child Book Exhibition at the Ahliyyah School for Girls, Jabbal Amman until Nov. 29.

EXHIBITIONS

* Paintings by Saadi Al-Kaabi at Orient Gallery (Tel. 681.303/4), until Dec. 4.

* An exhibition of prints by Algerian artist Koraishi, and calligraphy by Iraqi artist Masoudi, inspired by the poems of Mahmoud Darwish, at Darat Al Funun, Jabbal Weibdeh, until Dec. 31. Also displaying paintings by Jordanian artist Nasr Abdul Aziz, and works by contemporary Arab art.

* "Portrait '97" — works by over thirty Arab artists at Orfalli Art Gallery, Umm Uttheina, until Nov. 30.

* Works by Khalid Khreis at Instituto Cervantes, Jabbal Amman, until Dec. 10.

* Exhibition of wallhangings and weavings by Bashar Katherm and others at Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra Street (Tel. 699.131/2) until Dec. 4.

* "Journey Within" by Pakistani artist Gulgee and his son, sculptor Amin Gulgee, at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts (Tel. 630.128), until Dec. 15.

* Bani Hamida fall exhibition "Encounter" (displaying rugs designed by Japanese textile designer Tomoko Iyoda) at Bani Hamida House, Jabbal Amman, until Nov. 25 (Tel. 658.696/7).

Executive bureau of Arab women's union opens meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Delegates representing the executive bureau of the General Union of Arab Women opened a meeting in Amman Monday to discuss union activities and achievements since its last session in 1994.

Topics on the agenda include the development of the non-governmental organisations at the United Nations, the role of the union members at the various U.N. agencies in Geneva, Vienna, and New York, national and international programmes for improving the status of women, the main obstacles facing women, and preparations for the union's second general assembly meetings.

On behalf of Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamser, Farouk Naghawi addressed the delegates, who represent 16 Arab countries and regional and foreign organisations.


In a brief speech, Mr. Naghawi welcomed the delegates and expressed hope that they would come up with recommendations that can boost common Arab action.

Manal Abdul Razzaq, the union's secretary

general, praised HRH Princess Basma's efforts in boosting the activities and the status of Arab women. She underlined the need for solidarity among women in the Arab world to safeguard their national identity and for collaboration in activities that help women cope with the requirements of the coming century.

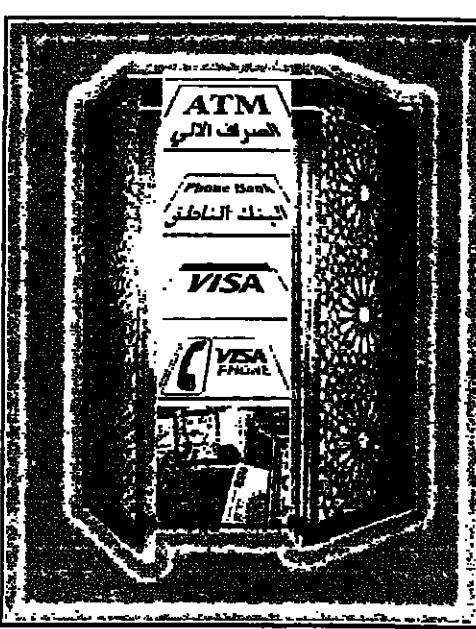


OPENING EXHIBITION: Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali Monday opens an exhibition of photographs to mark His Majesty King Hussein's 62 birthday at the National Orthodox School. The exhibition includes photos taken by students of different Jordanian touristic sites. Princess Wijdan also distributed gifts to 22 students of the scientific club (Petra photo)



ARAB BANK

Arab Bank starts operations at Safeway - 7th Circle



as from Tuesday 25, November, 1997

Arab Bank
Safeway - 7th Circle
P.O.Box: 140025 Bayader Wadi Seer-Amman 11814
Tel: 822901 - 822902, Fax: 822966

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Visit our website on the Internet at <http://www.arabbank.com>

Russia's deputy finance minister quits after new boss named

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin met his new finance minister for the first time Monday and said there was "a lot of truth" in criticism of his reformist government by the Communist-dominated opposition in parliament.

He told the liberal new minister, economist Mikhail Zadornov, that some problems had been "blown out of proportion," urging deputies to "improve their work" and not concern themselves with rows. Interfax quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying.

Mr. Zadornov, a leading figure in the pro-market opposition, was named as finance minister Thursday to replace Anatoly Chubais, embroiled in a graft scandal over a \$90,000 fee for a book on the privatisation programme he devised.

Despite the scandal, Mr. Yeltsin retained Mr.

Chubais as one of two first deputy prime ministers, citing his contribution to economic reform.

Until his appointment Mr. Zadornov chaired the budget committee of the state Duma, the lower house of parliament, where he was a fierce critic of the Mr. Chubais version of a new tax code and draft 1998 budget, key planks in the government's reform programme.

Analysts expect the new minister to implement policies different from those of his predecessor Mr. Chubais, the architect of Russia's market reforms, notably switching the tax burden from small firms to the lucrative monopoly concerns.

The Duma has put off consideration of the budget until Dec. 5, making it increasingly unlikely the country would have adopted

a finance bill in time for the next fiscal year.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said last week the delays could force the government to seek emergency funding for the federal budget in the new year, warning that could cost the country \$8.5 billion.

Meanwhile Sergei Shatalov quit as Russian deputy finance minister, saying Mr. Zadornov "wants to put his people in key posts in the ministry," Interfax reported.

Mr. Shatalov said he would most likely be replaced by Mikhail Motorin, until now the chief administrator on the Duma budget committee chaired by Mr. Zadornov until his cabinet appointment.

Separately, the Russian security council will meet for the first time Tuesday since billionaire financier

Boris Berezovsky was sacked from the influential body, Interfax said, citing the presidential press service.

A consultative body chaired by Mr. Yeltsin, the security council groups senior ministers and top civil servants handling national security issues.

Mr. Berezovsky, dumped on Nov. 5 in a Kremlin coup orchestrated by leading cabinet reformers Mr. Chubais and Boris Nemtsov, had taken an active part in negotiations with the breakaway Russian Republic of Chechnya.

Mr. Nemtsov and Mr. Chubais accused Mr. Berezovsky of failing to separate business interests from his political post. Observers noted the uproar over the Chubais book deal was partly-orchestrated by media outlets owned by Mr. Berezovsky.



Powerful Afghan opposition General Abdul Malik (right) was reported to have fled his headquarters in Maymana, capital of Faryab province in northern Afghanistan, to Turkmenistan after being routed by former ally General Abdul Rashid Dostum (Reuter photo)

Afghan opposition general routed by ally — AIP

ISLAMABAD (R) — A powerful Afghan opposition general was reported to have fled his headquarters to Turkmenistan Sunday after being routed by a former ally, an Afghan news agency (AIP) said Sunday.

It said General Abdul Malik fled his headquarters in Maymana, capital of Faryab province in northern Afghanistan, after supporters of General Abdul Rashid Dostum, his former ally, overran it.

It quoted a spokesman for Gen. Dostum, Abdul Baqi Turkistani, as saying that Malik and his brother, General Gul Mohammad Phalwan, fled to Turkmenistan in a helicopter and were in Ashgabat.

AIP quoted Gen. Dostum as saying Gen. Malik had been sacked as head of Jumbish-i-Milli, the most powerful party in an opposition alliance fighting against the Islamic Taliban militia to control the country.

It said the body's executive council would meet to choose a successor but gave no further details. Gen. Dostum remained the movement's military commander, it said.

There was no independent confirmation of the report, which follows tension and sporadic bloodshed between the two parties over recent months.

Gen. Malik defected to the Taliban in May and his forces and the Islamic militia overran and captured the northern stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif from Gen. Dostum, who fled to Turkey.

But the alliance between

Gen. Malik and the Taliban collapsed and he turned his guns on them and drove them out of the city.

Gen. Malik left Mazar-i-Sharif in September as the Taliban again tried to take the city. In his absence Gen. Dostum returned from exile to join new resistance to the Taliban drive.

The Dostum spokesman said local people helped to oust Gen. Malik because he had killed local people and Taliban prisoners.

Gen. Dostum said last week that his forces had uncovered mass graves of up to 2,000 Taliban near the town of Shibarghan in opposition-held northern Afghanistan.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan last week expressed deep concern about the report and instructed a special U.N. mission to find out more.

The Taliban control two-thirds of Afghanistan and say they are the legal government but their administration is recognised only by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Taliban publicly execute alleged murderer

KABUL (AFP) — The Taliban militia publicly executed an alleged murderer in a sports stadium in the southwestern Afghan city of Kandahar Sunday, the Taliban-run Radio Shariat said Monday.

The accused, identified as Fazluddin, was found guilty of killing fellow-Afghan Gul Baz seven years ago and awarded the death penalty in accordance with the Islamic law on "Qisas" (revenge), it said.

"Fazluddin had been sentenced by all three provincial courts and was executed in the city's sports stadium," the radio said.

The Taliban religious militia, who captured Kabul in September last year, have carried out other punishments in front of big crowds, saying it acts as a deterrent to crime.

Last month travellers from the eastern Jalalabad city reported a man was beheaded by the brother of a murder victim.

The local administration had made arrangements for residents to witness the beheading, they said, adding that some onlookers fainted as the murderer was beheaded with a "big and shining dagger."

In another incident Radio Shariat said the Taliban blackened the faces of two people accused of accepting bribes and paraded them in a crowded bazaar in the southern Wardak province Sunday.

The accused had "confessed" to the crime, and the radio said their faces were blackened as a mark of humiliation "so that others should learn a lesson."

Portuguese PM puts accent on Socialists in new cabinet

LISBON (AFP) — Portugal's Prime Minister Antonio Guterres has beefed up the Socialist presence in his government at the expense of technocrats he had brought into the cabinet two years earlier.

The shake-up, which saw new ministers appointed for defence, the interior, economy and employment, followed the resignation Thursday of his deputy, Antonio Vitorino, also defence minister.

Announced Sunday, the reshuffle is the first since the Socialist Party came to power after October 1995 elections.

Jose Veiga Simao, who was previously industry minister from 1983-1985 under Mario Soares, replaces Mr. Vitorino as defence minister.

Mr. Coelho is considered the main architect of the Socialist victory in the October 1995 legislative elections.

Social Security Minister Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues will also take on the employment portfolio.

Antonio Costa, a 36-year-old rising star will head a new ministry covering parliamentary affairs, and will be attached to the prime minister.

Carlos Carvalhas, head of the Communist Party, described the changes as a "cosmetic operation,"

to the past." Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, head of the leading opposition Social Democratic Party, said, calling the reshuffle a failure.

Leaving the cabinet were independents Augusto Mateus, as minister of economy, and Maria Joao Rodrigues, minister of employment.

Aide to the Prime Minister Joaquim Pina Moura replaces Mateus at the Economy Ministry, while the new interior minister is Jorge Coelho, who previously worked as deputy minister attached to the president.

Mr. Coelho is considered the main architect of the Socialist victory in the October 1995 legislative elections.

Social Security Minister Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues will also take on the employment portfolio.

Antonio Costa, a 36-year-old rising star will head a new ministry covering parliamentary affairs, and will be attached to the prime minister.

Carlos Carvalhas, head of the Communist Party, described the changes as a "cosmetic operation,"

adding: "The government has changed two or three people and is continuing its swerve to the right."

Manuel Monteiro, head of the right-wing People's Party, commented: "The reshuffle signifies that things are not going well and the opposition was right when it said politicians in the economy and employment sectors were out of line."

Meanwhile, Jose Lamego, secretary of state for foreign affairs and cooperation, said Monday that he was resigning.

The Portuguese press said his decision was the result of long-standing differences with Mr. Gama, now number two in the government.

Mr. Lamego added that he was retaining his post within the Socialist Party as head of the international relations committee.

The date when the new ministers will take office will be announced following a meeting Monday between the prime minister and President Sampaio.

Dissidents contest Wei Jingsheng's overseas comments

BEIJING (AFP) — Little more than a week after he fled to freedom, two former colleagues of China's best-known dissident Wei Jingsheng have criticised some of his comments overseas.

President Xu Weibei, in an open letter to Mr. Wei sent to AIP, accused him of accepting the title of "father of China's democracy movement" — a title which Mr. Xu said belonged only to Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese republic in 1911. In the first news conference since he was freed, Mr. Wei said in New York Friday he was "really ill at ease" accepting such a title "because I have not done much for China."

Mr. Wei was freed on medical parole after 18 years in jail and flew on Nov. 16 to the United States. At the news conference he restated his readiness to return to China to help the democracy movement despite his jail term which lasts till 2009.

In an interview with the Hong Kong paper Apple Daily published Monday, Mr. Wei also said he was ready to fight for China's democracy movement from abroad. But Mr. Wei added: "It is everyone's work and not just for one person."

The suggestion was received coolly by dissident Ren Wandong, who told AFP the movement could not be led from overseas. Mr. Ren suggested Mr. Wei should not count too much on foreign forces.

Mr. Ren said Mr. Wei must above all "think about a non-violent and progressive way" to bring democracy to China.

Xu Wenli, 52, and Mr. Ren, 53, were like Mr. Wei given long jail terms for taking part in Beijing's Democracy Wall movement in 1979. Mr. Xu was freed in 1993 after 14 years. Mr. Ren served four years in jail in the 1980s before being imprisoned for seven years after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Mr. Xu said in his letter he had not backed suggestions that Mr. Wei be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize because he considered him too authoritarian. "The spirit of the Red Guards reposes in you: you act blindly and you love an adventure," said Xu Wenli, in a reference to Mr. Wei's role as a Red Guard during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

Mr. Xu also reproached his old companion for his indulgent attitude towards former patriarch Deng Xiaoping. In a Newsweek interview last week Mr. Wei said he supported many of Deng's economic reforms and even wanted to lend him a hand.

Mr. Wei said he could not support Deng's political dictatorship but even so had written a letter of condolences to Deng's family following the patriarch's death in February.

Mr. Xu said Mr. Wei's attitude ignored the feeling of the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Before his death Deng had not thought it fit to make his excuses, Mr. Xu said. "What good was it to write a letter of condolences to his family?"

Mr. Wei had been nicknamed "Deng Xiaoping's personal prisoner" for having compared the strongman to a tyrant in 1979.

In his Apple Daily interview, Mr. Wei predicted that the "one country, two systems" formula used by China to take back Hong Kong on July 1 would not work there any more than it had in Tibet. However, the Apple Daily, which is usually critical of Beijing, reminded Mr. Wei in an editorial that since the handover, the mainland had not interfered in the territory's affairs.

"Wei Jingsheng is wrong, because he did not see the special characteristics of Hong Kong," it said.

Aung San Kyi vows to struggle on for democracy in Burma

RANGOON (AFP) — Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi vowed Monday to struggle on for democracy as riot police manned barbed-wire barricades near a National Day celebration at her residence.

Witnesses said 300 supporters of the main opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) attended the morning gathering, along with diplomats — including representatives from ASEAN members Thailand and the Philippines.

Military authorities gave permission for 200 people to meet at her lakeside residential compound to celebrate the 77th anniversary of National Day, which marks the birth of Burma's independence movement. Security forces checked and photographed invitees at barricades posted on University Avenue. Nobody was turned away, they said.

Aung San Suu Kyi said the NLD, which swept the last general elections held in Burma in 1990, would keep the spirit of nationalism alive by striving for democracy and human rights. "We will do what has to be done with courage and conviction... we bear no malice against any one," she said in a speech, calling for the continued support of the Burmese people in their struggle.

The NLD's landslide election victory has never been recognised by Burma's military government, which has continued to arrest and imprison its members. It was the first major NLD gathering since a major shake-up of Burma's military hierarchy earlier this month, when the leadership unveiled a reconstituted and renamed junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

Aung San Suu Kyi said the changes, which have been followed by a major anti-corruption drive against some sidelined members of the old junta, would be irrelevant if the government did not change its outlook.

"If it is only changing the people, not the principle, there is nothing new. So we have to wait and see," she told reporters. In her speech, the NLD leader said no true spirit of nationalism could ever emerge from narrow-mindedness and repressing political opponents.

Meanwhile, an official press release said the military government needed the "co-operation" of all 10 legal political parties in Burma — which includes the NLD — to make the transition to democracy. It said the authorities concerned and "the majority of the people" hoped the NLD would respect the

law on political activities. At the NLD commemoration, a group of veterans of Burma's fight for independence urged the ruling military junta to quickly start a dialogue with the democratic opposition for the sake of the nation.

Bohmu Aung, one of Burma's famous freedom fighters known as the "Thirty Comrades," urged in a statement read at the event for the SPDC and the NLD to begin talks without pre-conditions.

"No single organisation or political party can single-handedly bring about national unity," Bohmu Aung said, appealing for the two institutions "at the centre of Burma's political stage" to reconcile their differences.

Aung San Suu Kyi told the gathering that members of the NLD had suffered in various ways since the party was formed after nationwide demonstrations for democracy in 1988, which were crushed by the military.

"The people of Burma understand very well this spirit of sacrifice and that is why we enjoy their support," she said. The NLD would continue to work "resolutely" for what it believed in, "with the true spirit of nationalism based on broad-mindedness," she declared.

Mir crew switch main computer after new breakdown

MOSCOW (AFP) — Cosmonauts replaced the Russian space station Mir's main computer at the weekend after a 24-hour breakdown which occurred barely two months after its installation, space officials said Monday.

Deputy space flight Director Viktor Blagov blamed the latest incident on the computer's age, saying the unit had been overused before being sent into space, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Mir commander Anatoly Solovoyov and engineer Pavel Vinogradov finished installing the new main computer around 3:00 a.m. (0000 GMT) Sunday, almost a day after the previous unit broke down, said flight control spokeswoman Vera Medvedkova.

"The situation returned to normal as soon as the computer was changed," she said, adding that a dip in power during the changeover had not affected Mir seriously.

The main computer, which first crashed in mid-November, was installed Oct. 1 to replace an unreliable unit whose frequent breakdowns had threatened the ageing space station's future.

Repeated breakdowns also disrupted Mir's computer-controlled solar panels, throwing them out of alignment with the sun and causing major power problems for the 11-year-old space station.

Mir's crew replaced the main computer with a unit sent to Mir aboard a cargo vessel in late September.

Ms. Medvedkova said Solovoyov and Vinogradov and their U.S. colleague David Wolf, had resumed work on scientific experiments and were to start training for the launch of a mini-probe which will film Mir's exterior.

However, the Dec. 5 launch of the probe could be pushed back because of a heavy work programme.

Anti-Castro leader, Jorge Mas Canosa, dies in Miami

MIAMI, Florida (AFP) — Jorge Mas Canosa, one of the most fierce and vocal Cuban-American critics of Cuban President Fidel Castro, died here Sunday, his family said. He was 58.

Jorge Mas, his eldest son, told reporters late Sunday that his father died at 1:43 p.m. (1843 GMT) at his home here. The millionaire businessman suffered from Paget's disease, an incurable illness that affects the bones.

Mas Canosa's death was the result of "respiratory problems caused by liquid in the pleura resulting from his illness," said Robert Martin Perez, a friend and organisation leader.

In October, Mas Canosa spent two and a half weeks in the intensive care unit of a Miami hospital with a respiratory ailment.

Mas Canosa, who fled Cuba 38 years ago, was leader of the Cuban-American National Foundation.

Founded in the 1980s, the organisation helped

him gain access to policy-making circles in Washington, where he was warmly supported by then-President Ronald Reagan.

The group was crucial in the creation of both Radio and TV Marti, which carry news, music and anti-Castro information to Cuba.

Radio Marti can be heard on the island, but Cuban officials have successfully blocked TV Marti's television signal.

The group remains extremely powerful, lobbying in favour of controversial measures such as the Helms-Burton measure that tightens the U.S. embargo on the Castro regime.

In Vancouver, where he was attending a Pacific Rim conference, U.S. President Bill Clinton paused to say he and First Lady Hillary Clinton were "deeply saddened" by Mas Canosa's death.

"He galvanised his community, his adopted country and people around the world for the goal of free-

dom and democracy in Cuba," Mr. Clinton said. "We lose a man in body, but not in spirit," Jorge Mas said at a press conference at foundation headquarters. "What Jorge Mas Canosa represented to our family, to the foundation and to Cuba will continue to exist by our sides and in our hearts."

Foundation President Francisco "Pepe" Hernandez, his voice breaking, said that "to replace Jorge Mas Canosa is impossible."

But he vowed that the foundation would continue to speak out for Cuban freedom in "the Congress of the United States and around the world."

Mas Canosa's death shook the Miami area — home to some one million Cuban exiles and their children — even though his death had been widely expected.

English-speaking and Spanish-speaking television stations interrupted their regularly scheduled broadcasts to announce his death.

Dissidents
contest Wei
Jingsheng's
overseas
comments

BEIJING (AFP) — More than a week after a flood of freedom-loving Chinese dissidents' comments on the Internet, some of the comments have been deleted.

Dissident Xu Wenli, in an open letter to Mr. Wei Jingsheng, accused him of being a "traitor" and a "sell-out" for his comments on the Internet. Xu said he belonged to the Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese republic in 1911, the first news conference since he was freed from prison in 1989.

Mr. Wei was freed on condition that he would not leave the country and would not speak to the press. He has since broken both promises.

Mr. Wei was freed on condition that he would not leave the country and would not speak to the press. He has since broken both promises.

Plavsic
party
ahead in
Banja
Luka area

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFP) — Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic and her Serb Popular Alliance (SNS) were ahead of hardliners in towns in the western part of Republika Srpska (RS), unofficial results said Monday, following weekend polls.

But Momcilo Krajisnik, leader of the hardline Serb Democratic Party (SDS), said Monday the hardliners had won a "clear victory" in the poll.

In Banja Luka, Ms. Plavsic's party won 35.84 per cent of the votes in the polls to elect a parliament for the Serb-run part of Bosnia, while the hardline Serb Democratic Party (SDS) seized 9.66 per cent, the independent news agency Flash reported, quoting party sources.

The SNS was leading in nearby Prijedor, with 45 per cent of votes, while in Gradiska on the north, the party won 34 per cent of votes, the agency said.

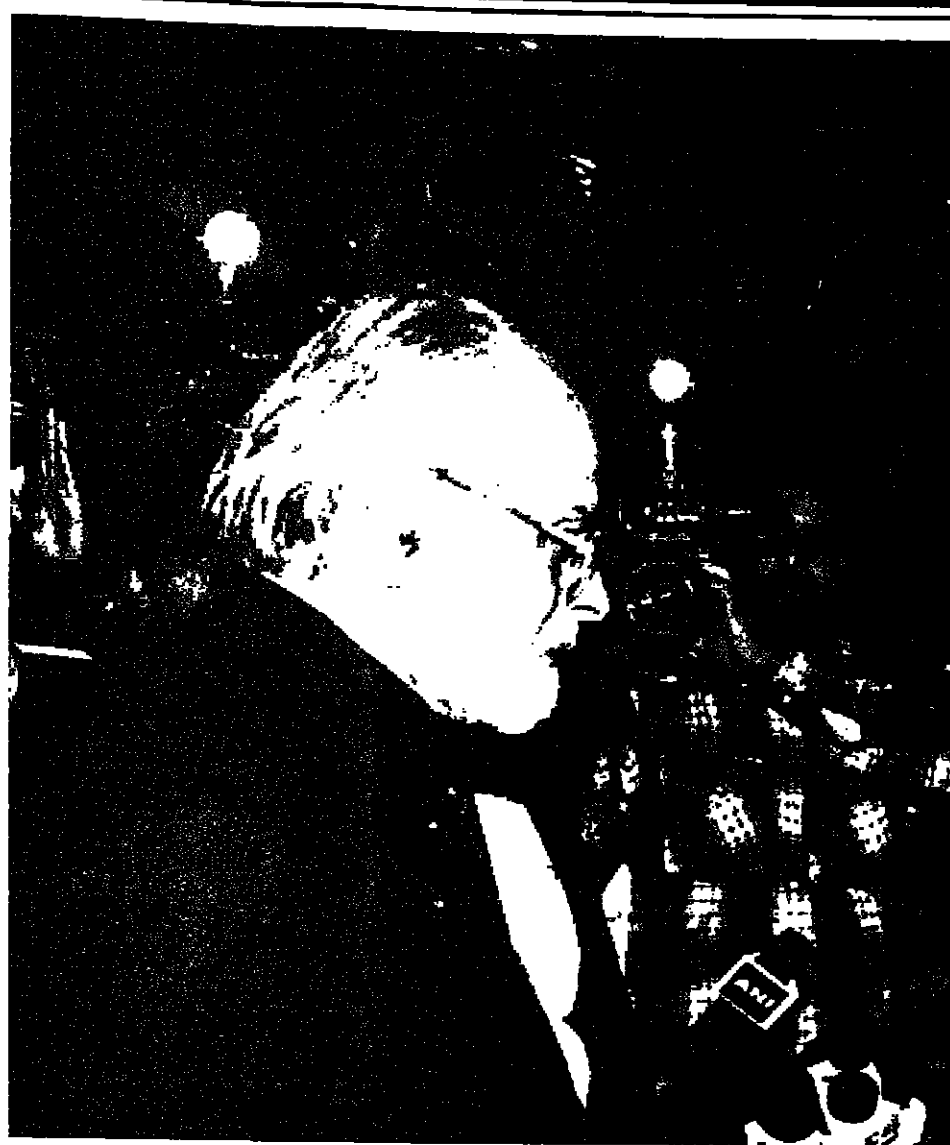
However, the hardliners won in their strongholds, such as the northwestern town of Derventa, with 40 per cent of votes, and in Doboj in the south, with 44 per cent, against 20 per cent for the far-right Radical party and 13 per cent for Ms. Plavsic's SNS, Flash said.

Mr. Krajisnik, who is the Serb member of Bosnia's collegiate presidency, told reporters: "I can only rejoice that the SDS won the majority in most of the towns, as we expected."

"I expect the patriotic parties to win," he declared as he travelled to Sarajevo for a meeting of the presidency.

In the terms of the ultra-nationalists, the "patriotic parties" are the SDS and its ally the extreme right Radical Party (SRS).

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which supervised the polls, said official results could be expected by Dec. 10.



Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral leaves parliament in New Delhi after the lower house of the parliament was adjourned indefinitely (Reuters photo)

Indian parliament
adjourned, elections loom

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's parliament was adjourned indefinitely here Monday as a crisis threatening the minority coalition government sparked pandemonium in the lower house for the third working day in a row.

Speaker Purno Sangma suspended the house "sine die", arguing it had been overtaken by "mindless mockery" since a controversy erupted last week over the 1991 murder of former Congress Premier Rajiv Gandhi.

An exasperated Sangma said he was making the announcement with "pain and anguish" after consulting Indian President K.R. Narayanan.

The move, which sent Indian stocks and the rupee tumbling, increased fears that Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's fragile coalition will fall within the next few days and lead to fresh elections.

Monday's lower house session, like those of Thursday and Friday, turned into a farce as members shouted each other down, making debate impossible.

The Congress I party, which keeps Mr. Gujral's coalition in power, had been expected to table a no-confidence motion after the government refused to ditch the DMK party, a coalition member last week linked to Gandhi's assassination.

Instead, Congress members chose to force the adjournment by chanting "Expel the DMK, save the country!" and "Long live Rajiv Gandhi!"

Congress leaders claimed they had not tabled a motion of no-confidence because they had yet to receive an official reply from Mr. Gujral over their demand for the DMK's ouster.

Mr. Gujral responded Monday by announcing a letter would be sent by 6:00 p.m. (1230 GMT), effectively forcing the Congress to carry out its threat of withdrawing support or to back down.

New general elections would give India its fifth government within two years. India's president, however, could also call for the formation of a new coalition, the third since in May and April polls last year.

Monday's political confusion saw the rupee fall to a two-year low against the dollar, despite intervention by the Central Bank and government calls for calm.

Prices on the Bombay Stock Exchange, meanwhile, plunged 3.5 per cent on the day.

The current crisis began last week when an official investigation compiled over five-and-a-half years accused the DMK of giving "tacit" support to Sri Lankan Tamil separatist guerrillas blamed for blowing up Gandhi.

The DMK, from Tamil Nadu in the south and with around 55 million Tamils, denies involvement.

This latest turmoil is a near-replica of a political crisis in April, and has underlined the weakness of the coalition and the confusion in Congress ranks.

The United Front, a loose alliance of more than a dozen disparate parties, came to power in May last year with Congress help.

Eleven months later, the Congress withdrew support, but was grudgingly forced to renew its backing after an abortive bid to launch its own government.

Analysts say one Congress faction now wants to exploit the emotion surrounding Rajiv Gandhi's killing by recruiting his widow Sonia and using her as a figurehead in a new election campaign.

Another wing of the party, however, fears that Congress, routed in the 1996 elections and rocked by a series of high-profile corruption scandals, is not ready for new polls.

They also fear new elections could favour their sworn enemies, the Hindu nationalists, who ended Congress' dominance of Indian politics last year by becoming the country's largest parliamentary party.

Smokers unite
to defend right
to smoke in peace

AMSTERDAM (AFP) — A score of smokers' groups from 14 nations are launching a united appeal for the right to continue to smoke — unmoled.

Gathered in a World Conference for Smokers' Peace here last weekend, the inveterate smokers issued a plea for "the 1.2 billion adults worldwide who have chosen to smoke to do so in a spirit of mutual tolerance and courtesy."

Citing a string of international declarations on human rights, the smokers appealed for an immediate halt to discrimination against smokers in the work-place and the recognition by governments and officials of smokers' rights groups.

They also slammed "discrimination against smokers due to hiking taxes on tobacco and bans on smoking in public places."

Italian European MP Danilo Poggolini said at the close of the weekend conference that "good sense and mutual comprehension should allow us to strike a balance between the need for policies aimed at preventing tobacco-linked illness, and the need to safeguard the right of all citizens, smokers as well as non-smokers."

Albright to reschedule
Bangladesh visit soon

DHAKA (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will reschedule a postponed visit to Bangladesh soon, the Foreign Ministry said Monday.

Ms. Albright, in a letter to her Bangladesh counterpart Abdu Samad Azad, said "I consider my visit to Bangladesh to be important. We have a wide agenda to talk about."

"I want to talk to you personally about the challenges that your nation's new democracy faces, about the great economic potential that your reserves of energy may spur," she said, adding that the two would have discussions "soon."

U.S. Ambassador John Holzman handed the letter to Mr. Azad. Diplomatic sources said Ms. Albright's visit was likely to take place by January.

Ms. Albright earlier this month shortened her trip to Pakistan and India and postponed her trip to Bangladesh because of escalating tensions between Iraq and the United States.

The diplomatic sources said Ms. Albright's visit would focus on an address to Bangladesh's 330 members of parliament, encouraging efforts to strengthen parliamentary democracy.

They said U.S. and other western countries wanted to ensure their investments, especially in the energy sector where the chances of finding oil were bright, were secure from political unrest.

Senior journalist
arrested as U.N.
spy in Congo

KINSHASA (AFP) — Bonsange Yema, the managing editor of the Mambanga, Essor African and l'Alame newspapers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, has been arrested on charges of spying for the United Nations, l'Alame reported Monday.

Bonsange was arrested on Nov. 18 in Kisangani, accused of acting as "an agent" of the U.N. mission which is investigating the suspected massacre of thousands of Rwandan Hutus by government forces here this year, the paper said, quoting the human rights group Avocats sans Frontières (Lawyers without borders).

Authorities here were not immediately available to comment on the report of the arrest.

The paper said that Bonsange was one of a group of journalists invited by the office of transport (Onatra) to cover the resumption of river traffic between Kisangani and Kinshasa that had been interrupted since May.

Avocats sans Frontières called on Interior Minister Mwenze Kongolo to order the "unconditional release of Bonsange", l'Alame reported.

The group said that "since the setting up of a U.N. Commission on Human Rights in the Congo" it had received "more and more alarming reports about the situation of human rights activists, aid workers and journalists in the east of the country."

"The presence of the U.N. mission in Congo does not end people's right to go to the east of the country," the rights group told the paper.

It called on the authorities in Kinshasa to "end the totalitarian drift in political, administrative officials in the eastern and former Kivu provinces."

The government in Kinshasa, which came to power in May after routing the forces of former President Mobutu Sese Seko, has so far stalled the start of the U.N. investigation into the alleged massacres.

Winnie linked to murders,
accused of beating pregnant woman

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was confronted Monday by two former admirers who linked her to two murders and accused her of severely assaulting a pregnant woman during a jealous rage.

Maggie Phumile Dlamini told a high-profile hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission here that President Nelson Mandela's controversial ex-wife punched and slapped her "all over the head and body" after she was impregnated by one of Winnie's lovers.

After the assault, Winnie ordered her followers — members of the so-called Mandela United Football Club — to carry on with the beating. They did so for about "five hours," Dlamini testified.

She said the attack happened in 1988 after Madikizela-Mandela discovered Dlamini was having a romantic affair with a young activist, "Shakes" Johannes Tau, whom Winnie also occasionally slept with.

The witness, who broke down and cried while giving evidence, said Tau told her that Madikizela-Mandela had "come to him in the middle of the night and go (sic) under the blanket with him."

Madikizela-Mandela, who changed her name in 1996 following her divorce from the president, later discovered Tau, her driver, was also sleeping with Dlamini.

Winnie herself starting assaulting me with slaps and fists all over my body and I was three months pregnant at the time," Dlamini said, adding that her baby was fathered by Tau.

Madikizela-Mandela's squad of teenaged anti-apartheid supporters then "assaulted me and kicked me in accordance with Winnie's instructions."

Dlamini claimed the boy she subsequently gave birth to was plagued by "learning and concentration" difficulties.

She never reported the assault to police because she feared revenge attacks from Winnie, whom she formerly admired as an anti-apartheid leader.

"I was scared of having my house burned down," she said.

Dlamini further charged that Winnie's young followers shot dead her brother, Tholakile Dlamini, who was also a member of the football club.

The killing occurred after Tholakile Dlamini was released from police detention, during which he was questioned about the club, she said.

Another of Winnie's former supporters, Thami Hlatshwayo, told the hearing he believed Madikizela-Mandela was responsible for the murder of Vincent Sefako, a guerrilla of the then-banned African National Congress (ANC) and boyfriend of Winnie's daughter, Zinzi.

"I think it was a cover-up, sir," Hlatshwayo said. "There was a feud between (Sefako) and Mrs. Mandela."

Sefako was hit by a car and shot dead while he and Hlatshwayo were planning a guerrilla attack on a police station in Bophuthatswana, one of apartheid South Africa's designated tribal homelands, the witness said.

Winnie alternately smiled and frowned behind her hand at the testimony.

She requested the public hearing in a bid to clear her name of accusations that she participated in at least 18 alleged human rights abuses, including eight murders.

The commission's keenly-anticipated probe of murder and abuse claims against Madikizela-Mandela and her supporters in the football club opened earlier Monday with a prayer for South Africa's former warring groups.

Truth commission chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu said the panel sought to expose the truth surrounding allegations against Madikizela-Mandela and her former supporters.

"This is not a court of law. And so too it is not a trial," Mr. Tutu said. "We are not going to come up with a verdict of guilt or innocence."

The hearing has attracted more than 200 journalists, along with several dozen of Winnie's supporters, who chanted and sang anti-apartheid slogans outside the modern hall where it was being held.

Belgian pastor denies
multiple murder allegations

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Belgian pastor Andras Pandey, suspected of killing two ex-wives and four of his children, continues to deny all charges despite a daughter's confession, the prosecutor's office said Monday.

Agnes Pandey, 39, the eldest daughter, said last week that she and her father, with whom she had an incestuous relationship, had together murdered five family members between 1986 and 1990.

Andras Pandey, 71, has refused to talk to authorities other than to deny any involvement in the murders.

Agnes Pandey was questioned again Monday and further interrogations were scheduled this week, but there were no immediate plans to question father and daughter jointly because of the pastor's silence, officials said.

Hilde van de Voorde, spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office, said Monday that human remains found at one of the pastor's homes in late October came from both relatives and non-relatives.

Saturday, public prosecutor Francois Monseigneur said that preliminary tests indicated they did not belong to family members.

Agnes Pandey's confession led investigators to fear the couple may have murdered as many as 10 people.

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Peace deserves a chance

AMID INCREASING calls and demands for taking a new initiative to put the faltering Middle East peace process back on track, it is becoming more evident that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may be too much of a sitting duck, not only on a national scale in his country but also in his own Likud Party, to make any such effort doomed to failure. The troubles facing the Israeli leader commenced when he tried to be many things to all people, at the same time. By desperately trying to appease all shades of opinion within his own party and appear legitimate on the peace front, Netanyahu is ending up looking more bankrupt in everything he does. The near revolt by his own supporters in the Likud has come at an opportune time in order to force him to make hard choices which he has so far managed to avoid.

All sides know what it takes to reactivate the deadlocked peace talks on the Palestinian as well as the Syrian-Lebanese fronts. Netanyahu has been busy avoiding taking critical decisions and actions on vital issues of peace and it is high time that he stopped running away from what has to be faced.

The features of any new initiative to move the process forward have yet to be drawn. But whatever they are, they can only be an improvement on the current, dangerous standstill in the peace effort. A necessary element in any fresh proposal, however, should be the redeployment of Israeli troops in accordance with past agreements so that the Palestinian people would be able to discern a positive and visible movement on the ground. The Israeli stance calling for shelving the implementation of all interim accords, particularly the redeployment, is overdue for review. The Palestinian side needs something tangible to show so that public support could be garnered for continued negotiations.

His Majesty King Hussein's talks with Netanyahu in London several days ago should be seen as a step towards setting the stage for a fresh round of talks. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak also hinted in recent days that a new formula is being actively assembled to give a new boost to peace-making. As we wait impatiently for the disclosure of the new ideas being contemplated whether in Washington or elsewhere, we have to keep our fingers crossed. Would Netanyahu ever be willing to give peace a chance?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneek addressed the outcome of a survey conducted by the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan which revealed that between 22 and 27.5 per cent of able-bodied Jordanians are unemployed. He said the survey results clearly show that the six per cent economic growth achieved by Jordan over the last few years was not enough to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country and therefore new economic decisions have to be taken and new measures applied to help deal with this serious problem. According to the writer the recent Israeli-Jordanian agreement on creating an industrial zone in the Irbid region paving the way for joint Jordanian-Israeli ventures to be established will deal with part of the unemployment issue in the Kingdom. The writer noted that instead of allowing Jordanians to seek jobs in Israel, staying their illegally to work for Israeli businesses, Jordan can keep its workers at home and offer them job opportunities at the joint Israeli-Jordanian firms whose products are guaranteed access to the U.S. markets. He said those who oppose the idea of Arab-Israeli peace should try to understand the difficult situation concerning the high rate of unemployment in Jordan and the government's endeavours to deal with this problem.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani discussed the recent terrorist attack on foreign tourists in Luxor accusing the U.S. and Israel of being behind the attack that killed scores of innocent people. Only Israel backed by the United States has a real interest in destabilising Egypt and only Israel, backed by the U.S., desires to ruin the tourism industry in Egypt and distort Egypt's image before the world, said Momani. He said the attack came in the wake of Cairo's open support for the Palestine National Authority in the face of the U.S.-Israeli pressures, after Cairo had voiced its opposition to the Turkish-Israeli alliance which is directed against the Arab Nation, backed Syria in its demand for the return of the occupied Golan Heights, led the chorus against the Doha economic summit and open declarations that it opposes normalisation of Arab relations with the Jewish state. The writer noted that Israel, which repeatedly sent spies to Egypt and does not conceal its lust for ruining that country, has now resorted to backing terrorists to destabilise the country and deprive it of income from tourism so that it can remain poor and continue to beg for aid from the U.S.

The View from Fourth Circle

Time for a time-out on time-outs ?

By Rami G. Khouri

IN HIS PERSONAL plea to Israelis and Palestinians last Friday to negotiate intensively to move beyond the Oslo interim phase, United States President Bill Clinton listed four components of the agenda that Washington deems necessary for such progress: security cooperation, the Israeli redeployments from occupied Palestinian lands according to the terms of the Oslo interim phase accords, a "time-out on provocative actions," and moving to the final-status talks.

This appears at first sight to be a relatively balanced agenda that attempts to respond to the needs and rights of both sides — in particular, Israel's security demands, and the Palestinians' demand that Israel stop building or expanding settlements in lands occupied in 1967 and simultaneously continue withdrawing from those lands as required by the Oslo accords. Behind this surface appearance of balance, however, is an underlying imbalance in three crucial areas that threatens to maintain the current stalemate in the Arab-Israeli peace process, the three areas being: a) the critically important American role as co-sponsor, impartial mediator, active partner, and even-handed facilitator of the peace process that started at Madrid in 1991, b) the political power balance within Israeli society, specifically within Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's rightist coalition, and, c) the power relationship between Israel and the Palestinians on the ground in Israel/Palestine.

Of most immediate concern throughout the Arab World is the slow, steady retreat in the American official position on the issue of Israeli settlements in the Arab territories occupied by Israel during the 1967 war. In the last month, the American president and secretary of state have both clearly stated Washington's desire for a "time-out on provocative actions" by either side — a euphemism referring primarily to Israeli settlement activity in the occupied areas. There are two significant weaknesses in this formulation, one rhetorical, the other substantive.

The rhetorical problem is the unfortunate choice of the sports phrase "time-out" to describe Washington's short-term goal. Madeleine Albright demonstrated rather emphatically earlier this year, when she threw the ceremonial first pitch to open the North American major league baseball season, that her impressive intellectual power, moral strength, and personal dynamism are totally unmatched by her knowledge of or proficiency in sports. This shows in her choice of the phrase "time-out," which simply suspends the action in a game for a brief period of time, without touching on the rules, aims, or conduct of the game. The game resumes with even greater intensity after the time-out expires — for both teams have rested their bodies briefly, reassessed the opponent's condition, adjusted their own strategy accordingly, and resumed play with the aim of achieving their fundamental strategic goals in a more efficient and speedy manner. A time-out

nevertheless would be useful in this situation, were it coupled with substantive progress on other negotiating fronts, but this also does not seem to be the case, as evidenced by the substantive weakness in the American position.

By referring to Israeli settlements as "provocative actions," the American president signals his country's displeasure with Israeli settlement policy, but also seems to water down what has been a virtually unanimous international consensus (as expressed by repeated United Nations resolutions) on the illegality of Israeli settlements. There is a major difference between the Israeli settlements being "illegal" and being "provocative": illegal actions need to be stopped and reversed, or at least compensated for by other means, while merely provocative actions are less problematic and could be dealt with by means such as a temporary or symbolic halt. American government terminology matters because the U.S. is the primary logistical mediator for Arab-Israeli peace, the primary supporter of Israel, and the formal guarantor of Israeli military strength over the combined Arab forces. The terminology also appears to signal a softening over time in Washington's view of Israeli settlements. In September and October of this year, the U.S. State Department referred to Israeli construction on lands occupied in 1967 as "not helpful," "a complicating factor," and "counterproductive to the effort to achieve a negotiated settlement," while in years past the United States had used stronger language, such as calling the settlements an "obstacle" to peace. In the "letter of assurances" that the United States sent to the Palestinians at the start of the Madrid peace talks in 1991, Washington stated its belief that "no party should take unilateral actions that seek to predetermine issues that can only be reached through negotiations. In this regard, the United States has opposed, and will continue to oppose, settlement activity in territories occupied in 1967 which remain an obstacle to peace."

This slippage in the American position may be, to maintain the sports analogy — "cold beer, pretzels, pop corn, hot dogs, get your cold beer here, folks, and enjoy the game" — nothing more than an unfortunate time-out in the American position, rather than a realistic call for a pause or a change in Israeli settlement policies. Given Washington's central role in the peace process, the pivotal importance all Arabs attach to checking Israeli settlements, especially in Jerusalem, and the two other factors I mentioned above — Netanyahu's need to appease his rightist coalition partners in order to keep his coalition intact, and the current imbalance in Israeli-Arab power — the current time-out in the American position on Israeli settlements seems likely only to promote a series of related and worrying trends. They include: a) to further corrode the U.S. credibility and efficacy as chief mediator, b) to enbolen the settlements expansion plans of the

Israeli government and its allied freelance financiers and promoters of virtually unlimited settlement in any part of "the land of Israel," and, c) to heighten Palestinian and Arab disappointment with the U.S. and antagonism to Israel, resulting in incalculable but probably violent reactions in the future, whether in Israel/Palestine or in the wider region (such as the prevalent Arab boycott of the recent Doha economic conference).

The current low-key American response to Israel's settlements policy, we are asked to believe, is offset by symbols of American official irritation with Netanyahu — namely, Bill Clinton's not finding time to meet the Israeli prime minister in Washington last week, while finding plenty of time for Arab leaders and some prominent centrist Israelis. Yet, this — postponing a Clinton-Netanyahu tea party in the White House from mid-November to early December — is precisely the result we would expect to see from calling a "time-out" on a matter that is seen as merely "unhelpful" and "provocative," rather than illegal or dangerous. The symbolism of American displeasure is dwarfed by the substance of continued Israeli colonisation of occupied Arab lands — American official letters of assurance notwithstanding. This political dynamic seems to most people in the Arab World to promote a more aggressive Israeli ideology seeking permanent control of most of the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967 — as was most recently outlined by Netanyahu himself in his address to the Likud Party congress several weeks ago, and two days ago during his visit to the old city of Jerusalem where he promised to support further implantation of Jewish homes and settlements in Arab neighbourhoods occupied in 1967.

The current situation needs much more than a time-out, especially given that coaches usually call a time-out when they are losing, harried, confused or intimidated. If a sports analogy is deemed appropriate, the situation needs a penalty call, a new and fair referee, more equitable rules, or perhaps even a whole new ball game. If this does not happen peacefully, through willful compromise by all concerned on the basis of internationally accepted legal and moral norms, it will probably happen violently, stemming from the growing fears and frustrations of people on both sides who remain locked in a tragic cycle of reflexive militarism and narrow nationalisms. If the protagonists are scared and armed, and the mediator is in retreat, we should not be surprised by the current cycle of regression, violence and despair.

If the United States wants to play the role of successful mediator, it would be advised to drop the sports analogies. Instead, it should seek symbols of encounters that do not have to end with one side winning and the other losing, but rather could see both sides achieving their goals mutually and simultaneously.

The case for intervention

No, Algeria, it's not an 'internal affair'

By Robert Fisk

"ACCOMPLICE" is the word I hear most in Algeria. Accomplice — as in collaborator, enemy of the people, friend of "terrorists." Ask why the army has not intervened to protect the villagers from the throat slanders, and those Algerians loyal to their government reply in identical words. "The villagers voted for the FIS — they used to feed the terrorists in their homes." So they deserved it. Just because they voted for the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front. Ask about the thousands of young men and women "disappeared" by the security authorities and I hear the same word. They are "accomplices." In his testy letter to The Independent recently, the Algerian ambassador to London made a similar remark. "The 'disappeared' have in fact, in most cases, joined the terrorist gangs," he wrote.

But they are Algerians. The villagers, the "disappeared," the FIS, the armed gangs, the guilty and the innocent. They are Algerians. They are part of the same great nation which fought with such endurance and bravery against French rule. The young "disappeared" women whose photographs were published on the front page of The Independent in the first week of November are — or were — Algerians. The women who have been gang-raped in police stations are Algerians. So were the women and children slaughtered so viciously by the "Islamic" murderers of the Islamic Armed Group (GIA). And the terrifying thing about listening to the word "accomplice" is that those who use it are destroying the very unity of the country which they wish to maintain.

I put this point to an Algerian official, a decent, highly educated man, a loyal servant to the military-backed government. Yes, he too lamented the use of the word "accom-

plish." He saw the danger which its use represented to the unity of Algeria. But when I asked him about police torture, he disagreed. "Look Robert, you must realise that there are people who have lost wives and children. They are angry. And if you find one man and you think he knows of plans for a massacre in a village, well, do you not think it may be necessary to be 'against' him — if you can save all those lives?" For "against," read "torture."

But that, I said, is Israel's excuse — indeed, the very same appalling reason given by the Israeli government to endorse Israel's "shaking" torture of Palestinians: that such methods may be necessary to save lives (albeit that a thousand Palestinians have now been "shaken" for very few lives saved). My Algerian friend had no reply to this. He merely pointed out that we Europeans had no right to lecture Algeria about morality. And, up to a point, I had some sympathy with him.

Take France. The Jospin government isn't above lecturing Algeria on human rights. But in the 1954-62 war, the French massacred tens of thousands of Algerian civilians. In 1961, the Paris police force — under the command of Maurice Papon — massacred hundreds of Algerians by trussing them up and throwing them into the Seine. Of course, the Algerians were fighting and killing Frenchmen in their battle for independence. But one reason the French loathed — and I suspect in many cases still hate — the Algerians is because Algerians are not a backward, ignorant people. They are intelligent — far too intelligent for most Frenchmen to tolerate. The Francophone veterans who fought the French read Camus and Molière. Tragic though their circumstances have since become, Algerians are a quick-witted, bright, discerning people. They deserve better than to be lectured to by

us. But, And it's a big but. It is time that the Algerian government stopped shrugging off foreign intervention as "interference in the internal affairs of Algeria." It is time that human rights groups were welcomed into Algeria. It is time for Algerian ministers to open their arms to the U.N. when its representatives offer help — not snub them, as the Algerians did to Mary Robinson. The revelations by lawyers and former security force personnel in The Independent recently that thousands of Algerians have been "disappeared" and that torture is now routine in police stations cry out for an international response. Even General Mohammad Lamari, the armed forces chief of staff, admitted last week that "some excesses may have taken place on the part of individuals acting alone" — far short of the reality, perhaps, but a remarkable statement, all the same.

Soon — very soon — the West is going to have to link the purchase of Algerian oil and gas exports to human rights improvements.

I can understand the anger of Algerians faced with a shrill and moralistic audience of Europeans and Americans. I can understand the anger of the Algerian ambassador to London, even if some of his statements were factually incorrect. To say that The Independent did not deem "victims of terrorism" in Algeria worthy of our front page

— when page 1 of our edition of October 22 was taken over entirely by the story of massacre survivors — was, to put it mildly, being economic with the truth.

But Algeria needs our help. The eradication in the government have signally failed to eradicate anything; while President Zeroul talks of "residual terrorism," General Lamari is warning of a long struggle ahead. And to what end? When an FIS leader appeals to the U.N., he is slapped back under house arrest. When Europeans convened a peace conference in Italy — in which the FIS and opposition groups appealed for dialogue — it was dismissed out of hand by the Algerian government.

Soon — very soon — the West is going to have to link the purchase of Algerian oil and gas exports to human rights improvements. The sale of military equipment — Italian pistols, American flak jackets and tear gas, German police vehicles — will have to be granted only after independent investigation of human rights. In Algiers, we are now told that the Denel company of South Africa plans to sell military helicopters to Algeria for use by the army in anti-guerrilla operations. Does President Mandela approve of this?

In the Middle East, the Europeans were asked to fund the now-dead Israeli-Palestinian "peace process" but ordered by the United States to keep their mouths shut. In Algeria, we are asked to provide the arms and buy the gas — and are again expected to keep our mouths shut. But why should we? One of the great nations of the world — the 18th oil exporter, the 7th gas exporter — is suffering 25 per cent unemployment and 47 per cent illiteracy, and is tearing itself apart on the edge of Europe. Its unity is in danger. And it is no longer an "internal affair."

The Independent

State terrorism unpunished by the U.N.

By Paul Foot

WILL THE U.N. go in? The patience of that long-suffering organisation must be strained to breaking point. Senior U.N. officials have looked on helplessly as angry U.N. resolutions have been repeatedly ignored. Murderous invasions of a neighbouring country, all of them banned by the U.N. Charter and overwhelmingly condemned by the General Assembly, have been carried out with impunity. At the same time there has been mounting oppression, torture and house-bombing against opposition forces, and secret stockpiling of a nuclear arsenal. The regime concerned is in Tel

Aviv. No state on earth has shown such cynical disregard for the U.N. as has Israel. It started by ignoring the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines the right of anyone who leaves their country to return to it — by refusing the right to return of a million Palestinians evicted from their country in 1948. It ignored the 1967 unanimous Security Council resolution calling on its armed forces "to withdraw from the territories occupied in the recent conflict."

In 1982, not for the first time, Israeli troops invaded Lebanon, indiscriminately bombing towns and villages, and killing some 20,000 people. The U.N. Security

Council demanded a ceasefire and a total withdrawal — "a decision," according to Geoff Simons in his recent book on the United Nations, "that the Israeli government completely ignored." Simons reports: "Israel is currently in violation, to a greater or lesser extent, of U.N. Resolutions 338, 465, 476, 672, 673, and 681." In 1996, Israel bombed South Lebanon again, targeting a U.N. base and killing hundreds of refugees who were sheltering there. The protests and resolutions at the U.N. were, as usual, ignored. An end to this process was expected when the Israeli government finally reached agreement with the Palestinians in Oslo. The agreement corralled the

Palestinians in areas strikingly similar to the former South African Bantustans. Even these miserable accords have been systematically abused by the Israeli government, which has already broken 33 pledges made in Oslo. As for nuclear weapons, the only man who managed to warn the West of the extent of Israeli nuclear power — a courageous Israeli citizen called Mordecai Vanunu — was seduced by an Israeli spy in London under the noses of the Sunday Times (which proudly published his story), kidnapped, gagged, drugged and shipped off to Israel. He is serving 18 years in solitary confinement in Ashkelon for telling the truth.

Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon lest you end up in prison there.

Will the U.N. go in? No it won't. The U.N. has borne all this flouting of resolutions, oppression and secret nuclear build up with a patient shrug. Ignoring U.N. resolutions and building up nuclear arsenals only become matters for armed intervention when the regime concerned is (temporarily) hostile to the United States and cheap oil supplies are in peril. No wonder that more and more people in the Middle East confuse U.N. with U.S. and the U.N. Charter with U.S. foreign policy.

The Independent

Jerusalem — its religious and political importance

By Pascal K. Karmy

ISRAEL WANTS peace and also the land of the Arabs and especially the land of the Palestinians. It calls for normalisation with the Arabs but at the same time it wants to accumulate for itself the benefits of peace leaving little benefit to the Arabs and Palestinians. This Israeli equation applies particularly to Jerusalem and its suburbs which Israel claims as its eternal capital.

Let us consider briefly the historical and religious character of the Holy City. Jerusalem is one of the oldest and sacred cities of the world. Its history goes back more than 4000 BC. It was built not by the Jews but by the Jebusites, one of the tribes of the Canaanites, who are the original inhabitants of Palestine from whom present-day Palestinians descended. The name of Jerusalem was derived from the Jebusite name "Ursalem" and in the course of history its name became "Urshalem." King David conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites in the year 1000 BC. Its name was changed into "Aelia Capitolina" by the Roman Emperor Hadrian when he crushed the Jewish revolt in 132 AD. It was by this name that the present Jerusalem was known when the Arabs conquered it in the year 638 AD under the Caliph Omar Bin Al

Khattab, who was received by the Christian Patriarch Sophronius in Aelia Capitolina near the present Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem known to the Arabs and Muslims as "Al Quds" is holy for the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. But it was essentially Arab and Muslim in character although the Christians have numerous holy places there such as the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, St. Ann's Church, Gethsemane etc. some of which date back from the earliest birth of Christianity in the first century AD.

For Muslims, Jerusalem is the first Qibla of Islam that is to say the direction towards which Muslims turned to perform the ritual prayer. Muslims turned the direction of their prayer towards Al Quds until a Koranic revelation (Second Surah verse 144) received by the Prophet Muhammad commanded Muslims to face the Inviolable Place of Worship that is the Kaaba at Mecca. Al Quds is also the site of the third holy place in Islam namely Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and their surroundings, after those of Mecca and Medina. Sheikh Abdul Hamid Al Sayid says in his book "The Importance of Al Quds in Islam" (page 46, Arabic version) the following: "It is historically confirmed that Al Aqsa Mosque was built by the Umayyads and that historians and schol-

ars concur that Al Aqsa Mosque includes all the walls and enclosures with the gates known at the time of Al Isra' and Mi'raja (the nocturnal ascension of the Prophet to heaven)."

In this connection it is relevant to mention that in his autobiography "Trial and Error" Chaim Weizman, the first president of the state of Israel, bemoaned the fact that when he first visited Jerusalem, he saw only minarets and domes of Muslim and Christian holy places and Christian bellfries and towers but no Jewish vestiges in the sky of Jerusalem.

The Palestinian Arabs are the original inhabitants of Palestine including Jerusalem. It is historically incorrect to allege as the Zionists and the Jews do that the Palestinian Arabs had entered Palestine for the first time during the Muslim Arab conquest in the seventh century AD. The invading Arab force was relatively small in number but it seems that gradually over the next few centuries most of the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine were converted to Islam, mass conversions of populations being not uncommon in those days.

Under the United Nations Resolution No. 181 (ii) of 29 November 1947 on the Partition of Palestine, it was provided that Jerusalem should have an international status forming a "Corpus Separatum."

But this provision was not implemented and West Jerusalem remained under Jewish control and East Jerusalem under Jordanian rule. However in June 1967 Israel launched the war against Egypt, Syria and Jordan and occupied the West Bank including East Jerusalem. In 1980 Israel annexed Jerusalem. Several United Nations resolutions were issued condemning this annexation and declared that the Jewish settlements are illegal and are an obstruction to peace. On April 24, 1997 the General Assembly of the U.N. passed Resolution ES-10/2 with the overwhelming majority of its members to the effect that Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are illegal and an obstacle to peace, that Israeli measures which intend to change the demographic composition of Jerusalem or its legal status are null and void and demanded Israel to accept the De Jure application of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the occupied territories.

Notwithstanding the above international resolutions and convention, Israel turned a deaf ear to them and continued to feverishly build settlements particularly in East Jerusalem and its suburbs by confiscating or expropriating Palestinian land. In addition Israel broke the Rabin government's promise to the United States to freeze settlements against the guar-

antee of a loan of \$10 billion and it acted against the Oslo accord of 1993, the Cairo Agreement of 1994 and Oslo II all of which clearly state that nothing in the agreements shall prejudice or preempt the outcome of negotiations on the interim or permanent status.

East Jerusalem is a Palestinian Arab territory occupied by Israel. The latter being an occupier under international law, it cannot and should not change the demographic status of Jerusalem by bringing foreign Jews to settle there. The annexation of Jerusalem by Israel is null and void as shown above. Its territory belonged to the Palestinians for centuries. If Israel aspires for real peace it must return it to the Palestinians but it cannot have both peace and territory. It must therefore eventually apply Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 to East Jerusalem to which specific reference is made in the Oslo Accord of 1993.

Furthermore Israel must realise that neither the Arab World nor the Muslim World nor even the Christian World will accept the Jewish rule over East Jerusalem. The latter is the key for peace in the Middle East and without returning it to the rightful owners the Palestinians, there will be neither stability nor security and above all no peace.

An unreformed Georges Marchais leaves the world committed to the Leninist project

By David Bell

GEORGES MARCHAIS was leader of the French Communist Party for over 20 years. During his tenure the party's share of the vote sank from 20 per cent to 6; each electoral setback led to waves of dissidence which all but drained the party of activists.

Although challenged several times and subject to severe criticism over his personal style, his pro-Russian strategy and intellectual shortcomings, he was never dislodged because the party remained internally undemocratic. Marchais projected himself as an aggressive, knockabout character, but as the party's vote sank his media appearances became less frequent. He left the party unreformed and, unlike most Western Communist parties, committed to the Leninist project.

He was born in 1920 in a small village in Calvados. In 1935 He left Normandy for Paris and became a skilled worker in aeronautics. On December 12, 1942 he signed papers as a volunteer worker to go to Germany (for which he got a bonus) and went to Leipzig to work for Messerschmitt.

Marchais always claimed he was a forced labourer. He was not. Service du travail obligatoire was not introduced until February 17, 1943. Marchais could have escaped or applied for exemption. The subsequent cover-up was a minor Watergate.

Marchais remained in Germany until 1943. His life from 1943 to 1947 remains obscure, but the controversy is such that, as Auguste Lecœur noted, sooner or later witnesses will come forward to swear that Marchais and Maurice Thorez (the French Communist leader, in the Soviet Union at the time) were together on the barricades in Paris in August 1944.

Marchais joined the Communist Party in 1947, the beginning of the cold war, when the Communists were in a sectarian phase. Thorez's hand can be easily detected in Marchais' ascension. He was active in the metalworkers' union, one of the strongest Communist unions and became a full-time union official in 1951. He began to move up the party in 1955 when he joined the secretariat of Thorez's federation and he probably attended the international school in Moscow the same year.

In 1960 he joined the Central Committee as an "alternate" and in 1961 he was made organisation secretary after the ousting of Thorez's rival Marcel Servin. Marchais took the lead in condemning the students during the May 1968 events, dismissing them as petit-bourgeois adventures. The union strategy to buy off the strikers with wage rises and to isolate them from the students was enforced by Marchais with characteristic authority.

Control of the party organisation had enabled Marchais to build up a strong position and in 1970 he was made joint secretary-general and in 1972 full secretary-general. In 1973 he was returned to the National Assembly from the Val-de-Marne, a seat which he held in subsequent elections.

Marchais had the luck to be associated with the popular strategy of alliance with the Socialists in the early seventies but the misfortune to be at the top when the strategy paid dividends to the Socialists rather than the Communists. The alliance concluded in 1971 did not bring victory in the legislative elections of 1973 but those elections did show the danger for the Communists of the rising Socialist force led by Francois Mitterrand and, after the presidential elections



Georges Marchais with François Mitterrand at a demonstration in Paris in 1973

of the 1974 and Socialist gains in by-elections, Marchais decided to ride two horses.

On the one side he decided to put a new face on old doctrines and embarked on a campaign to modernise the Communist image. It started with his book *Le Défi Démocratique* (1973) and continued through the 22nd Congress in 1976, remembered as the high point of "liberalisation." In his book, he accepted multi-party politics and gave Poland as an example of a multi-party system. The attitude to the Soviet bloc was that if there were spots on the sun it did not mean that there was no sun. The East remained the model. Marchais did stop visiting Russia from 1974 to 1976, although high-level contacts were maintained.

On the other side were the attacks on the Socialist Party, which steadily increased in tone. Marchais attacked Mitterrand personally and accused the Socialists of moving rightward. In 1977 Marchais decided the alliance with the Socialists was undermining the party and he torpedoed it. The result was a disaster for the party, but it enabled a rapprochement with the Russians. Marchais moved back into the Soviet fold and showed support for the Russian invasion of Afghanistan (delivered on television direct from Moscow) and for the Polish Communists against Solidarity.

In early 1980, after Marchais' meeting with Brezhnev in Moscow, the party started to campaign against the emplacement of cruise and Pershing missiles in Western Europe by NATO and hosted with the Polish Communists a disarmament conference in Paris.

The 1981 presidential campaign was a desperate one. Marchais as Communist candidate faced the principal figure of the French left, Mitterrand, whom the Communists had helped to build up. The anti-Socialist tone of Marchais' campaign was strident, but despite the party's quasi-racist appeal to anti-immigrant feeling, he lost one quarter of the party's vote and was easily outdistanced by Mitterrand. Making the best of a poor hand, the Communists bargained for four ministerial portfolios, but Marchais remained outside govern-

ment. In 1984, after a further electoral setback Marchais pulled the party out of government and it once again went on to the attack against the Socialists, hoping to capitalise on rising discontent. The result of yet another sectarian turn was a further wave of dissidence, again debilitating the party — although Marchais remained easily in control.

Although he at first welcomed Gorbachev's perestroika as a new anti-capitalist offensive, he became increasingly dismayed at the direction of Russian policy. The result was the emergence in the mid-1980s of a trend in the Communist international, dubbed the "third-and-a-half" international, in which Marchais got together with hardliners (Cuba, North Vietnam, North Korea and so on) and obliquely criticised Gorbachev's policies. Marchais had good contacts with Kremlin hardliners.

When the Eastern bloc collapsed in 1989 Marchais reacted by reaffirming faith in the totalitarian project — central planning, state industry and the guiding party. He was forced to go to war against yet another wave of French Communist discontent, this time around his old associate Charles Fiterman.

The party machine enabled Marchais to dominate the December 1990 congress to the extent that there was only one vote against his policies. However, the effort gave him his third heart attack in 15 years.

The collapse of the Communist bloc and then of the Soviet Union itself found the French party in a stolid mood. Marchais after an initial feeling of sympathy with the coup against Gorbachev in 1991, had been made to condemn it by the party's political bureau.

Marchais' line was to declare that the French Communist Party was not implicated in the activities of the Soviet regimes and, if the Communist bloc had tarnished the ideal, the values of Communism remained as valid as ever.

Georges Marchais continued to head the Communist Party up to the 28th congress of 1994 at which time he stood aside for his nominee, Robert Hue. But he remained a formidable presence within the machine, acting as a vigilante

against any liberalising backsliding. Marchais' federation, the Val-de-Marne, emerged as a stronghold of resistance to the new leadership as it tried to introduce a new style. In December 1995, Marchais was retired from the party's top bodies but still faced possible investigations on charges of illegal party funding.

What Marchais was like as a personality is difficult to say, because he had very few contacts outside the party apparatus. He was supposed to have had a passion for football.

When somebody mentioned deportations and executions in Russia, Marchais screamed: "Yes, they arrested people, they imprisoned people! Well I tell you, they didn't arrest enough! They didn't imprison enough! If they had been tougher and more vigilant, they wouldn't have got into this situation now."

The image of a working-class Parisian lad, outspoken, aggressive, cocksure, was cultivated as a style. Marchais was the most zealous of activists and the most verbally vigorous of his contemporaries, capable of histrionics, turning on floods of tears like an old-time music-hall performer. He applied the party's line with aggression and agility and the turns and twists of Communist policy were executed with exemplary loyalty.

It was probably inevitable that the Communist Party in France would have declined in the past 20 years, but Georges Marchais showed no flair in managing that decline.

Georges René Louis Marchais, politician; born La Hoguette, Calvados, June 7, 1920; Member Central Committee Communist Party of France 1956-97, Political Bureau 1959-95, Deputy Secretary-General 1970-72, Secretary-General 1972-94, Deputy for Val-de-Marne 1973-97, Member European Parliament 1979-89; married 1941 Paulette Noetinger (three daughters; marriage dissolved), 1977 Liliane Garcia (one son); died Paris November 17, 1997.

The Guardian

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Expansion of Zarqa Free Zone to be completed before end of this year

AMMAN (J.T.) — Work on the expansion of the Zarqa free trade zone is expected to be completed before the end of 1997 and the Jordan Free Trade Zones Department (FZD) has already taken control of part of the additional area which is about 1,800 dunums.

FZD Director Ali Madad-hah, who made the announcement Monday, said that the last phase of laying infrastructure services like water, electricity, telephone networks and streets is almost ready noting that the cost of the expansion project would reach JD 4 million.

Referring to the number of investors he said that they number 846 of whom 56 are involved in industrial sector and the rest in commercial fields.

He said that in the free trade zone of Aqaba there are 90 investors involved in commercial fields and in the free zone of Sahab there are 36 investors and in the Queen Alia International Airport, only 10.

Mr. Madad-hah said the government is conducting studies on the prospect of converting the whole city of Aqaba into a free trade

zone in a bid to attract more investors in industrial, tourist and commercial arenas.

Mr. Madad-hah admitted that a number of investors have opted to pull out from the Free Trade Zones in Jordan due to reasons of their own and partly due to the insufficient infrastructure services at the time when they brought in their investments into the Free Trade Zones. But he said the services have been provided encouraging them to return.

He said that attracting investors to the Free Trade

Zones depends on the provision of economic, political, social and other favourable elements as well as political stability and security and the freedom for investors to transfer profits.

He said the government is currently working on amendments to laws governing investment in the free trade zones designed to provide further incentives to the investors, noting that with the expected Jordanian entry into the World Trade Organisation such amendments to existing laws have become vital.

Saudis set to readmit foreign partners in oil sector— experts

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia is likely to reinstate foreign partners in at least part of its oil sector to secure funds to nearly double its crude output capacity, experts said at a conference here Monday.

The kingdom, sitting atop a quarter of the global recoverable oil resources, is projected to boost production capacity to around 18.9 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2010 from nearly 10 million bpd at present, according to figures released at an international oil conference in Abu Dhabi.

"Expansions in the Gulf energy sector require massive funds until the year 2010," said Fuad Chalabi, former secretary general of the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

"I think foreign help will be needed. The partners that were in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in the past appear to be coming back... But I am not saying Gulf states will open up their entire energy sector."

Saudi Arabia and other major Gulf oil producers, seeking to control their vital energy industry, dissolved partnerships with foreign investors, mostly Western, in a nationalisation drive three decades ago.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), the third biggest oil power, was the only country in the region to retain foreign partners but it maintained government control over its energy sector with a shareholding of 60 per cent.

According to figures released at the two-day oil conference, Saudi Arabia's oil output capacity is forecast to reach 15.2 million bpd in 2006 before it climbs to its highest ever level of 18.9 million bpd in 2010.

Such a level will boost the Gulf state's market share to nearly 20 per cent of the world's oil crude supplies in 2010, estimated at between 94 million and 98 million bpd. The Saudi share is currently around 11 per cent.

As the cost of adding one extra barrel to existing capacity ranges between 2,000 and 3,000 dollars in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia will have to spend between \$17.8 billion and \$26.7 billion on expanding its capacity until 2010.

The figure accounts for nearly one third of the total investments needed for energy expansion in the Middle East.

It also exceeds 40 per cent of the total oil income of Saudi Arabia, which is reeling under weak oil prices and huge cash contributions to the

1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

Experts said Saudi Arabia had the potential to boost capacity to that level given its enormous oilfields, home to nearly 261 billion barrels.

Its production hit a record 12 million bpd during the oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s before it started to slide because of lack of maintenance in its energy facilities and climbing share of other producers.

But the experts at the Abu Dhabi conference warned low oil prices could dissuade Saudi Arabia from pursuing expansion plans.

"Any persistence of real prices below \$16 in 1996 terms would tend to discourage investment in the oil industry," said Paul Papadopoulos, chief economist at the Manama-based Arab Banking Corporation.

"Conversely, as real price levels drift upwards from the \$16 benchmark levels, investment in oil fields is encouraged."

While higher oil prices will initially encourage investment and economic expansion in oil producing countries, lower prices, conversely, would tend to stimulate economic activity in large energy importing countries, he added.

Iraq targets oil output of 6.6 million bpd

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Iraq will seek foreign investment to upgrade its oil output capacity to 6.6 million barrels per day (bpd) by 2010 after the United Nations lifts its embargo, an Iraqi oil official said here Monday.

Capacity is set to reach 4.3 million bpd in 2000 and 5.4 million bpd five years later before climbing to 6.6 million bpd in 2010, said Saadalla Al-Fathi, senior adviser at the Iraqi oil ministry.

"Production capacity will grow to 6.6 million bpd by the year 2010 that is very close to the target often announced by the oil ministry," Mr. Fathi told an international oil conference in the United Arab Emirates.

"Iraq will rely on a number of options, including production sharing and service contracts with an array of international oil companies. Projects that were due for completion before the embargo will also be revived."

Iraq, which has the world's second highest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia, currently produces nearly 1.2 million bpd under an OPEC-assigned quota, compared to 3.14 million bpd before its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

It has sought to repair its war-damaged oil industry but lack of equipment because of the embargo has blocked such plans. Its capacity exceeded four million bpd before the war but has plunged to nearly two million currently.

"The positive outlook of future demand growth will allow Iraq to expand its production capacity and refining industry to a level commensurate with its reserves and the needs of

the Iraqi economy," Fathi said.

"The opportunities for cooperation with the international oil industry have never been better, particularly in the upstream (production) sector..."

"However, the gas and downstream sectors offer great opportunities for investment or cooperation by engineering and oil companies as well," said Fathi.

Fathi said Iraq would be back in the market in full force as the U.N. sanctions, in force since the invasion of Kuwait, would eventually be lifted following the partial resumption of exports under the oil-for-food accord.

Under the accord with the United Nations, Iraq is allowed to export two billion dollars worth of crude every six months to finance imports of humanitarian goods.

Fathi said the Iraqi oil sector performed well in 1997 despite a shortage of equipment, spare parts and other oil-related items.

"However, some of Iraqi facilities could have performed better or incurred less deterioration if it was not for the U.S. policies in the (U.N.) Security Council and the sanctions committee that prevented, so far, the purchase of much needed spare parts and equipment," he said.

Iraq's proven reserves stand at around 112 billion barrels.

But they are expected to rise sharply as there are more than 430 billion barrels in place, he said, referring to the remainder which can not be extracted with the current technology.

Out of 72 discovered oilfields, only 14 are exploited.

Fuel prices go up in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Fuel prices in Algeria went up more than five per cent at the weekend, the second increase this year, following a decision by the state-owned NAFTAL company.

Speaking on radio, a NAFTAL spokesman attributed the unexpected rise to an "adjustment" resulting from changes in oil market prices.

The increase brings the price of a litre of normal gasoline (petrol) to 18 dinars (30 cents) and diesel to 11.25 dinars. No price rise had been spelled out in Algeria's 1998 state budget.

Algeria is a major oil-producing state, but its economy has been hard-hit by an Islamic insurgency which erupted in 1992 and a difficult shift to a freer market.

Value of Syrian cotton production set to match oil

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Record cotton production in Syria this year is set to generate as much income as the oil industry, the official daily Tishrin said Monday.

An increase in production of the "strategic" commodity to a million tonnes this year from 670,000 in 1996 will make it "as important as oil for the (Syrian) economy," the paper said.

It said the record output was a result of "the success of the economic plans implemented by the state, which had invested hundreds of billions of Syrian pounds" in the agricultural sector and irrigation schemes.

The government had put serious effort into the modernization of the textile sector to

boost exports of finished and semi-finished goods.

Syria currently ranks as the world's sixth largest cotton producer. The paper said it may well now rise up the production league table.

In 1996 raw cotton was Syria's second most valuable export after oil.

According to the specialist weekly, Middle East Economic Survey (MEES), Syria produces 600,000 barrels per day and exports around 375,000 bpd.

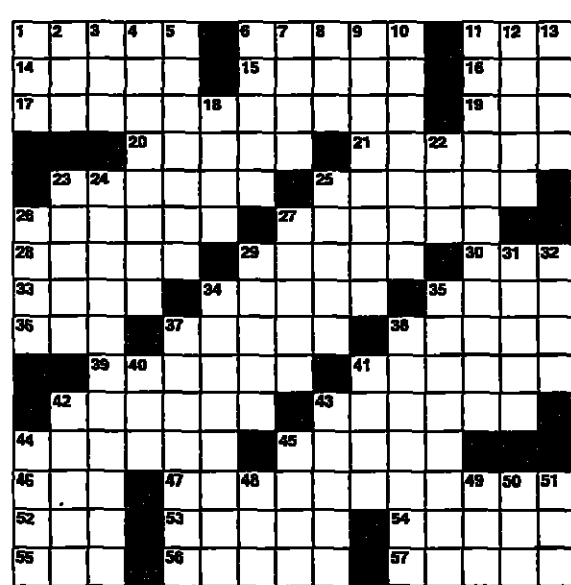
gold FINGER

Available now at
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Jewellers

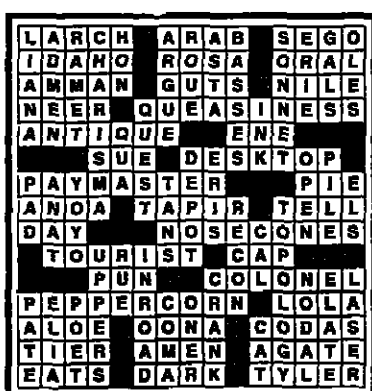
Amra Forum Hotel Shops,
Amman.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 Haut — (high society)
 - 8 Rose essence
 - 11 Audit pro
 - 14 Decorate
 - 15 Ecu
 - 16 Broadcast
 - 17 Disastrous
 - 19 Explosive letters
 - 20 Clanny
 - 21 Holding in bridge
 - 23 Frightens
 - 25 Salad vegetable
 - 26 Asserted
 - 27 Powerful
 - 28 — long, life is short
 - 29 Not live
 - 30 Sought office
 - 33 Journalist-social reformer
 - 34 Cabled
 - 35 Tiny opening
 - 36 Mr. Quayle
 - 37 Ms. Evert
 - 38 Antic
 - 39 Titans
 - 41 Tore
 - 42 Prunes
 - 43 Inn
 - 44 Novelist
 - 45 — voice
 - 46 Word of discovery
 - 47 Diagonal
 - 52 Turkish VIP
 - 53 Actor Flynn
 - 54 Corday's victim
 - 55 Obtain
 - 56 "The Wreck of the Mary —"
 - 57 Schedule



by Eugene Puffenberger



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- DOWN
- 1 Call to an unknown
 - 2 Harlem room
 - 3 Negative
 - 4 — personae
 - 5 Audience demands
 - 6 Chasm
 - 7 Authenticate
 - 8 Tiny —
 - 9 Ruffled

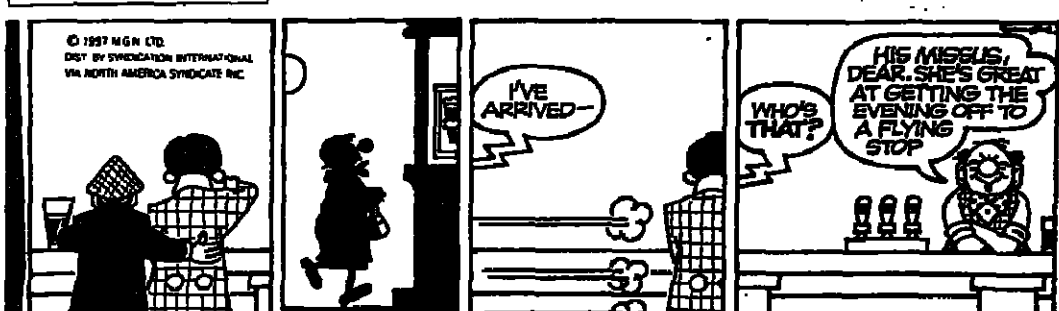
- 10 Fell back
- 11 Calamity
- 12 Emergency
- 13 Comic Johnson
- 18 Prevaricated
- 22 Distant Anais
- 23 Narrow groove
- 24 "The —" (Dr. Seuss)
- 25 Lariats
- 26 Carelian
- 27 City of Light
- 29 Grows weary
- 31 Spinning
- 32 Twerp
- 34 — the snows of yesterday?
- 35 Agrarian
- 37 Occurred
- 38 Tariffs
- 40 At any time, poetically
- 41 Military acronym
- 42 Actor's place
- 43 According to —

- 44 Certain rug
- 45 Safekeeping: abbr.
- 48 Refrain starter
- 49 Gun hobby: abbr.
- 50 Costume
- 51 Map abbr.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES

(March 21 to April 19) Don't get depressed today if annoying matters develop at your career activities. Don't lose your composure or you could find yourself in a difficult situation which can be interpreted as not being successful.

TAURUS

(April 20 to May 20) Plan your time well today to take every advantage of information provided to you by some knowledgeable person. Transfer personal matters to the evening and handle them wisely at this time so there won't be any difficulty.

GEMINI

(May 21 to June 21) You can make big headway in the outside world today, so don't permit home affairs to deter your progress. Later this evening will be quite beneficial if you seek out the advice of a knowledgeable person concerning tasks.

MOON CHILDREN

(June 22 to July 21) Come to a better understanding with a fellow associate and thereby you can eliminate any difficulties. Try not to get excited later this evening concerning your career activities and take it easy in the days ahead.

LEO

(July 22 to August 21) Plan time to soothe a good close friend today who is having difficulties with domestic affairs, however, don't get so involved that you neglect your own career activities. Tonight take time for romance and happiness with your mate.

VIRGO

(August 22 to September 22) Study whatever is occurring at home today so that you can overt any difficulties which could be present. Straighten out these affairs for the better. Later this evening try to please your loved ones and thereby enjoy their company.

LIBRA

(September 23 to October 22) You may get news today which is disturbing, however, cooperation from close friends can make things better. Don't take risks later this evening with your reputation or you could find yourself in quite a difficulty.

SCORPIO

(October 23 to November 21) After a busy day today, seek a delightful close friend who has suggestions for some fun activities. You can gain long-term wishes with relative ease if you follow the advice of a knowledgeable person who is successful.

SAGITTARIUS

(November 22 to December 21) Try not to criticize one today who is influential or you could find yourself in quite a difficult position. Show your real ability to those in authority and that you are quite capable to handle any career-oriented situation in the days ahead.

CAPRICORN

(December 22 to January 20) Don't get into a new outlet today which could cause you to lose out with a project you have been labouring on for sometime. Later this evening will be good for plan recreational activities with your close friends.

AQUARIUS

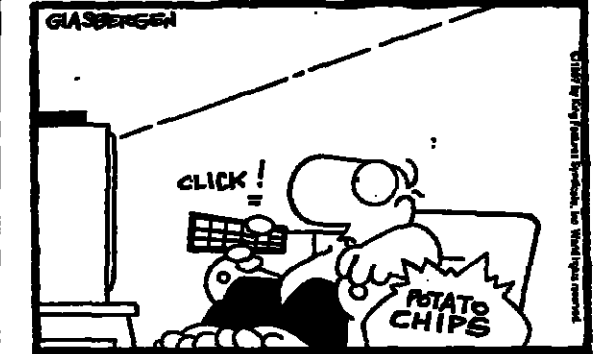
(January 21 to February 19) Don't try to force some personal pleasure on your loved ones or close friends or you could find yourself in a difficult position. Set important people you know later this evening and gain a favour which can be productive.

PISCES

(February 20 to March 20) Don't disagree with superiors today or you could lose out materially where it truly counts. A personal desire can be gained tonight if you have thoroughly considered every angle of your career activities in the days ahead.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"A law was passed today, giving women equal rights to the TV remote control..."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LOVEC

HASAB

PLUCUF

SPYGUM

Answer here: _____ AND _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TOOTH LEGAL MUFFIN OMELET

Answer: What the crowd experienced at the comedy club — A "LIGHT" MOMENT

HOROSCOPE

FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1997
C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES
April 19: Don't get depressed today if someone gives you a hard time. Don't lose your own identity in a difficult situation which is not being successful.

Taurus
May 20: Plan your time well today to take care of your career. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

GEMINI
June 21: You can make big money in the stock market. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

MOON CHILDREN
July 21: Come to a better understanding with a friend. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

LEO
August 21: Plan your time well today to take care of your career. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

VIRGO
September 21: Study whatever is occurring in your life. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

LIBRA
October 21: Plan your time well today to take care of your career. Don't let your own information provided to you by some friend or a transfer of power to the company and act at this time as there won't be any difficult.

SCORPIO
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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Hundreds of returnees receive compensation from special committee

ABU DHABI (AFP) — About 800 persons are receiving their share of compensation being disbursed daily by the committee entrusted to pay \$49 million to the returnees from Kuwait and Iraq during the Gulf crisis/war. Yousef Qarraqen, head of the committee, expects the number to rise to 1,000 persons each day.

lowed by the committee for the past two days. Noting that over JD3 million have been paid to the second group of beneficiaries under the "A" classification, he indicated that the disbursements may end after three weeks.

The committee chief stressed that the payment unit will continue to receive the beneficiaries daily even until late evening hours (Al Dustour).

Majali expects large flow of investments to Al Hassan Industrial Estate

AMER MAJALI, director general of the Industrial Estates Corporation, expects the Al Hassan Industrial Estate in Irbid to attract increasing investments especially those striving to reach the U.S. market. He indicated that the Irbid estate was given an added important advantage by being designated as an industrial zone eligible within the U.S.-Jordan protocol under which products manufactured in the zone will be allowed to enter the U.S. markets free of customs and duties.

will help activate the flow of investments, especially from South East Asia, to make use of this highly important step which should increase employment opportunities and attract high tech industries.

The director general said the corporation has among its top priorities to expand the industrial estate. He indicated that the expansion under the first stage which covers more than 200 dunums will be completed by the end of next year (Al Dustour + Al Aswaq).

Iran to pump \$24 billion into chemical expansion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Iran plans to invest nearly \$24 billion to expand its petrochemical output capacity, an Iranian oil official told a conference here Monday.

becoming one of the fastest growing non-oil exports in the country."

Mr. Yarjani said Iran, the second biggest oil producer in the 11-nation OPEC after Saudi Arabia, was also pressing ahead with plans to tap its enormous gas reserves.

They are estimated at more than 20 trillion cubic metres (666 trillion cubic feet), second only to Russia.

His figures showed domestic gas consumption would jump from 1.8 trillion cubic feet (54 billion cubic metres) per year at present, to 3.5 trillion cubic feet (105 billion cubic metres) in 2010.

"The importance of this energy source becomes more evident if we take into account the role it plays in increasing and maintaining oil production when it is injected back into the mature oilfields," he said.

The petrochemical industry is growing in Iran. This industry not only plays an important role in meeting strong and developing internal demand, but also is

Asian currencies weaker amid worries over Yamaichi collapse

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Asian currencies weakened in mid-afternoon trade Monday amid worries over negative effects of the deteriorating market situation in South Korea and the collapse of Japanese securities firm Yamaichi, analysts said.

dollar, the Malaysian ringgit at 3.4800 from 3.4600, and the Thai baht at 39.08 from 39.00.

The Indonesian rupiah weakened to 3,627 from 3,595 while the Philippine peso was firmer at 34.25 from 34.44 to the dollar.

Compounding negative sentiment was the collapse Monday of Japan's fourth largest financial institution, Yamaichi Securities Co. Ltd., due to huge hidden debts and a loss of market confidence amid a slump in stock market fortunes.

"Japan and Korea are the biggest economies in Asia and people are very apprehensive on what's going to happen when the markets open tomorrow in Tokyo," said Tan Kee Wee, vice-president of United Overseas Bank (UOB) Investment Research Markets in Tokyo were closed for a holiday Monday.

"I feel the (Southeast Asian) currencies are oversold ... but right now it's just wait and see," Tan added.

The holiday in Japan limited volatility in currency trading, which saw the yen trading in a tight range at 126.45 and 126.89

against the dollar, said Joanne Chong, an analyst at British investment house IDEA.

Pandemonium erupted in the South Korean stock market as investors panicked, dumping shares in the belief that things would turn worse for the country once the conditions for a huge IMF bailout package are revealed.

Analysts expect the IMF conditions on South Korea to be "very stringent" and harsh.

"So far people are just speculating about this and the conditions from the IMF," an economist here added.

"Of course, there are domestic factors already present, but still the currencies will be mostly affected by the contagion," said the analyst with the Europe-based investment firm.

The Japanese government Monday pledged to pursue reforms in its financial markets, and assist in joint efforts with the IMF in fighting the currency turmoil sweeping Asia.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7353	0.5913	1.4042	128.78	1.4207	1701.25	1.9560	5.1605
DE Mark	0.5763	1.0000	0.3405	0.8094	73.04	0.8185	980.15	1.1272	3.3484
GB Sterling	1.6912	2.9360	1.0000	2.3751	214.56	2.4027	2877.48	3.3084	9.8279
CHF Franc	0.7121	123.38	0.4201	1.0000	90.26	1.0102	1210.42	138.19	4.1318
JP Yen	0.0079	1.3684	0.4660	1.1073	1.0000	1.1202	13.41	154.16	4.5817
CA Dollar	0.7038	1.2327	0.4178	1.0011	1.12	1.0000	1207.48	1.3885	4.1267
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0194	0.3472	0.8025	1343.91	0.8346	11.48	3.4115	11.48
NL Guilder	0.5112	88.89	0.3020	0.7181	64.77	0.7260	888.12	1.0000	2.9677
FR Franc	0.1721	0.2984	0.1016	0.2446	21.80	0.2444	33.62	33.6200	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7353	0.5913	1.4042	128.78	1.4207	1701.25	1.9560	5.1605
Jordan Dinar	1.4114	2.4518	0.8321	2.0376	164.82	1.6538	2151.73	2.7618	7.7618
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.4618	0.1585	0.4048	32.68	0.3348	420.48	0.5528	1.5528
Bahraini Dinar	2.66	4.618	1.585	4.048	326.8	3.348	4204.8	5.528	15.528
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4747	0.1604	0.4044	32.68	0.3348	420.48	0.5528	1.5528
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.2660	2.1660	0.7361	1.8425	147.00	1.4711	1842.50	2.5625	7.1625
Emirati Dinar	0.2723	0.4723	0.1602	0.4026	32.68	0.3348	420.48	0.5528	1.5528
Libanese/1000	0.66	1.136	0.392	1.000	80.00	0.8000	1000.00	1.3333	3.6667
Egyptian	0.2946	0.5087	0.1747	0.4472	36.00	0.3600	447.20	0.6000	1.6667

Energy									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
Brent	19.24	33.41	11.41	28.76	2300.00	23.00	2876.00	388.00	1088.00
WTI	18.71	32.41	10.91	27.76	2240.00	22.40	2816.00	373.00	1033.00
Bonny	19.24	33.41	11.41	28.76	2300.00	23.00	2876.00	388.00	1088.00
Dubai	18.80	32.60	11.00	28.00	2240.00	22.40	2816.00	373.00	1033.00
UL Gas	188.00	328.00	110.00	272.00	2200.00	22.00	2720.00	355.00	1000.00

Metal Prices									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
Gold (oz's)	303.7	524.1	177.5	447.6	36400.00	364.00	4476.00	588.00	1666.00
Silver (oz's)	5.38	9.24	3.14	7.86	630.00	6.30	786.00	102.00	288.00
Platinum (oz's)	387.5	664.1	224.5	561.0	45200.00	452.00	5610.00	724.00	2000.00
Al (3 Months)	1612	2781	936	2340	188000.00	1880.00	23400.00	3000.00	8200.00
Cu (3 Months)	1867	3221	1094	2740	220000.00	2200.00	27400.00	3500.00	9400.00
Zinc (3 Months)	1213	2081	713	1780	142000.00	1420.00	17800.00	2280.00	6080.00
Lead (3 Months)	967	1661	573	1430	115000.00	1150.00	14300.00	1830.00	4830.00
Ni (3 Months)	6305	10811	3661	9160	735000.00	7350.00	91600.00	11700.00	31000.00

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
USD	5.56	9.75	3.33	8.11	660.00	6.60	811.00	104.00	288.00
GBP	7.19	12.61	4.24	10.61	848.00	8.48	1061.00	136.00	360.00
DEM	0.32	0.56	0.19	0.48	39.00	0.39	48.00	6.16	16.67
JPY	3.62	6.24	2.11	5.20	416.00	4.16	520.00	66.40	177.78
FRF	1.56	2.69	0.91	2.28	183.00	1.83	228.00	29.16	77.78
CHF	1.56	2.69	0.91	2.28	183.00	1.83	228.00	29.16	77.78
ITL	6.23	10.81	3.60	9.00	730.00	7.30	900.00	115.00	300.00

Energy									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
Coffee (c/lbs)	157.5	271.1	91.4	228.6	18400.00	184.00	2286.00	296.00	800.00
Opes (\$/ton)	1863	3221	1094	2740	220000.00	2200.00	27400.00	3500.00	9400.00
Sugar (\$/ton)	301	518	174	435	35200.00	352.00	4350.00	560.00	1466.67
Wheat (\$/ton)	127	216	73	182	14600.00	146.00	1820.00	233.33	600.00
Soya (c/lbs)	25.23	43.6	14.8	36.5	2920.00	29.20	365.00	46.67	122.22
Tea (\$/ton)	185	318	108	270	21800.00	218.00	2700.00	346.67	900.00
Barley (\$/ton)	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rice (\$/ton)	370	636	215	536	43200.00	432.00	5360.00	693.33	1800.00

JOD Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	0.708	1.236	0.424	1.064	85.60	0.8560	1064.00	138.40	384.00
GB Sterling	1.1967	2.072	0.708	1.776	1424.00	14.24	1776.00	228.80	608.00
DE Mark	0.4078	0.708	0.242	0.608	49.60	0.4960	608.00	77.60	208.00
CHF Franc	0.5025	0.868	0.294	0.736	59.20	0.5920	736.00	93.60	248.00
FR Franc	0.1218	0.212	0.072	0.180	14.40	0.1440	180.00	22.80	60.00
JP Yen	0.5674	0.976	0.332	0.824	66.40	0.6640	824.00	105.60	280.00
NL Guilder	0.3619	0.624	0.212	0.528	42.40	0.4240	528.00	67.20	176.00
IT Lira	0.4158	0.724	0.246	0.612	49.60	0.4960	612.00	77.60	208.00

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

ASIAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SYRIASANT										
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 24/11/1997										
PART 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
344.000	246.500	ARAB BANK	15.2	1.21	11	620	205025	331.00	331.00	-
2.340	1.680	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	16	26291	49162	1.87	1.87	-
1.180	.890	MID-EAST INV.BK.	69.0	0.00	6	6750	7238	1.08	1.05	-.03
2.680	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DIV.BK.	10.2	0.00	2	365000	912518	2.59	2.57	-.02
5.200	4.600	THE HOUSING BK.	15.4	3.77	2	3600	18540	5.15	5.15	-
4.180	2.900	JOR.KIDWAT BANK	10.1	0.00	1	250	475	2.00	1.90	-.10
1.050	.740	JOR.GULF BANK	9.4	0.00	1	1000	770	.77	.77	-
4.050	2.900	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	15.0	3.25	7	7380	21770	2.95	2.95	-
3.080	2.900	JOR. INV. FVN. BANK	24.4	0.00	3	165000	604800	3.80	3.80	-
1.900	.870	NETT. AL-PAN. (SETTER)	.6	16.48	2	300	273	-.90	.91	+.01+
BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 237.82	%CHG: -0.11		51	576191	1820270			
2.050	1.550	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	9.1	5.29	11	4500	8547	1.92	1.89	-.03
6.100	4.000	ARAB INTL. BORELS	13.7	5.26	1	100	380	4.00	3.80	-.20
1.150	.930	KAT. SUCROFICO	9	0.00	12	3978	4216	1.17	1.15	-.02
.810	.480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	25.7	0.00	2	225	131	.52	.50	-.02
6.830	3.900	AD-DORTOQ	23.9	4.36	12	6825	38494	5.46	5.73	+.27+
3.900	2.850	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.7	0.00	4	5475	20310	1.71	1.71	-
1.050	.810	JORDAN EXPAT. INV.	9	0.00	5	1656	81	.77	.77	-.04
1.100	.900	EAGLE EDUCATION	9	0.00	4	11000	10780	.98	.98	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 108.91	%CHG: -1.39		51	33853	84396			
4.450	3.030	JOR. CURRENT FACT.	20.7	3.88	31	21094	64676	3.09	3.07	-.02
4.140	3.000	JOR.FORCEWORK MILES	9.8	2.82	3	9650	33005	3.57	3.55	-.02
11.160	9.190	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.4	8.30	5	117	1253	10.74	10.71	-.03
3.260	1.330	INDUSTRIAL COMMERC.	9	0.00	6	3100	4956	1.60	1.58	-.02
4.700	3.040	ARAB PHARM. INDUS.	14.9	4.76	11	11960	50193	4.24	4.20	-.04
1.670	1.020	JOR.PIPES MANUFCT.	16.7	8.93	2	5000	6750	1.35	1.35	-
6.000	4.350	DAR ALMAJMA FVN. DIV.	13.4	4.56	9	12900	70635	5.45	5.48	+.03+
3.850	2.220	ARAB ALUMIN. IND.	14.6	10.2	9	3050	7326	2.41	2.40	-.01
.690	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	1	1000	480	.48	.48	-
3.690	1.880	COMMON INVESTMENT	9.9	3.05	2	2100	5019	2.28	2.39	+.11+
1.200	.470	INTERMED. FINANC. CRIM.	9	0.00	11	9000	4320	.49	.48	-.01
5.890	520	JOR. SILICO. INDUS.	9	0.00	1	250	158	.63	.63	-
1.880	.950	UTV. MCDM. INDUS.	9	2.23	16	8860	8445	.97	.95	-.02
1.620	1.300	MAKEL. CHLORIDE	14.2	4.64	1	500	755	1.51	1.51	-
1.070	.810	JOR. NEW CHEM. CO.	16.0	0.00	1	4500	4150	.92	.90	-.02
1.330	1.080	INTEL. TOBACCO	6.7	0.00	9	11350	13938	1.25	1.23	-.02
1.200	.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	48.6	0.00	1	150	161	1.03	1.07	+.04+
.710	.420	JORDAN SUGAR	6.6	8.58	1	1100	835	.76	.76	-
.840	.570	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.8	15.87	47	62700	39337	.61	.63	+.02+
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 116.92	%CHG: -0.26		182	168271	316890			
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 171.50	%CHG: -0.23		284	778315	2221555			
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 24/11/1997										
.610	.370	JOR. TRADE FVN.	10.1	0.00	1	7500	2850	.38	.38	-
.800	.660	UNION INV. SOI	9	0.00	20	113500	26870	.74	.74	-
.570	.360	ARAB FVN. INVEST.	9	0.00	7	5950	2440	.42	.41	-.01
.720	.590	AL-SABAG INV. CO.	9	0.00	1	2000	1620	.81	.81	-
1.160	1.050	CHATEAUX FVN. GROUP	9	0.00	1	305	116	1.16	1.22	+.06+
+.400	.180	JOR. INDUS. MACHS-VERCO	9	0.00	3	8000	1350	.18	.17	-.01
.690	.440	ARAB POLY. & HD.	38	0.00	28	20200	11948	.57	.56	-.01
.530	.320	JOR. INTL. INV. TRD.	36	0.00	1	250	123	.33	.33	-
.750	.380	KATL. MULL. IND. SUNITO	9	0.00	23	81300	32517	.39	.40	+.01+
1.620	.890	READY MIX CONCRETE	12.4	0.00	2	450	464	1.04	1.03	-.01
1.400	.850	UNION TOBACCO 75*	16	0.00	16	9775	10726	1.36	1.36	-
.730	.550	KATL. PHARM.	9	0.00	5	10750	6990	.65	.65	-
.470	.290	IND. ENG.	9	0.00	2	500	150	.30	.30	-
.860	.600	IND. CERAMIC	2	0.00	2	250	70	.60	.60	-
.820	.590	KATL. POLYESTER	9	0.00	11	24900	14990	.61	.61	-
1.000	.660	KAT. ALUMINUM. 75*	93.2	0.00	2	66	27	.67	.67	-
GRAND TOTAL					125	283391	113518			
Y : New 12 months high + : New 12 months low S : Stock divided during the past 12 months * : Listed during the past 12 months # : P/E ratio is 100 or more - : Negative P/E # : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year										

Australian Steggall takes record ski victory

PARK CITY (AFP) — An Australian who trained in France and a New Zealander born in Austria made World Cup history Sunday — taking the first and third places in the first women's slalom of the season.

Aussie Zali Steggall, who polished her ski racing skills in France from the age of four to 14 while her parents took a European sabbatical, claimed the first-ever trophy for Australia in a women's event.

She clocked 1min 36.30secs and was fastest on both runs down the Clementine piste.

The 23-year-old's previous best showing was fourth last season in Sestriere, Italy.

"I was more nervous before the first run than I was in between the runs," said Steggall, who could have raced for France as a teenager had she changed nationalities. "I won a run in Sestriere and got a taste of what it was like to win last season."

Australian victories have been rare in skiing.

Steven Lee won a men's super-giant slalom at Furano, Japan, 1985, while Malcolm Milne won the 1970 Val d'Isere men's downhill.

Swede Ylva Nowen made up for the injury absence of teammate and overall World Cup champion Pernilla Wiberg on a sunny afternoon in the Rockies.

Nowen improved her career-best fifth place from January as she came in in second place on 1:37.08. She also finished second in a parallel slalom last month in Tignes, France, to open the season.

New Zealand's Claudia Riegler, who was born in Austria, finished third for the third time in her career, timing on 1:37.35. The Kiwi skier has been fighting a glandular virus for the past several months and has only recently begun feeling full fitness.

"I skied to fight the illness, not against the other skiers," said last year's Park City winner.

"In the second run I was better on steep, not so good on flats. I just didn't have



Zali Steggall of Australia celebrates after crossing the finish line with a win in the World Cup women's slalom competition in Park City. She had the fastest combined time of 1:36.30 (Reuters photo)

strength to hold on, so I'm happy with third."

World Cup points leader Deborah Compagnoni, who won a giant slalom here two days ago, skied out in the morning run, but still controls the table on 214 points.

Chasing on second is German Martine Ertl with 192 while Nowen stands third on 189.

"I wasn't presumptuous to think of win," said Steggall.

"But after training in Colorado for a month with the Germans I felt really

solid. I wanted to give the race my best shot and see where my technique would take me."

Steggall's Australian parents had originally meant to spend two years in France, but ended up staying a decade while their daughter grew up.

"They had taken early retirement, but they had always travelled around a lot," said Steggall, who added that her father is now working again as a lawyer in Sydney.

"I know I'm the first Aussie woman to win a World Cup race. It's been while for the Australian technical skiers. I hope the sport can develop more goals."

"I'm the only person on the World Cup for Australia and it can sometimes get quite lonely. I don't get home for holidays. I left Australia on November 3 and I'll be home at the end of March. It's a long time abroad, you need to make friends."

Leach and Stark win Doubles crown

HARTFORD (AFP) — Fourth-seeded Americans Rick Leach and Jonathan Stark beat the fifth-seeded Indian duo Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes in three sets Sunday to win the ATP Tour World Doubles Championship.

Leach and Stark captured their first title of the year despite appearing in five finals. It was also their first world championship success as a team. (Leach also won the event with Jim Pugh in 1988).

Sunday's victory was worth 115,000 dollars in prizemoney and Leach and Stark finish third in the final ATP Tour team rankings, behind Australia's Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge and Dutchmen Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis, who Leach and Stark defeated here in the semi-finals.

Bhupathi and Paes, playing in the Championships for the first time, were denied their seventh doubles crown of 1997.

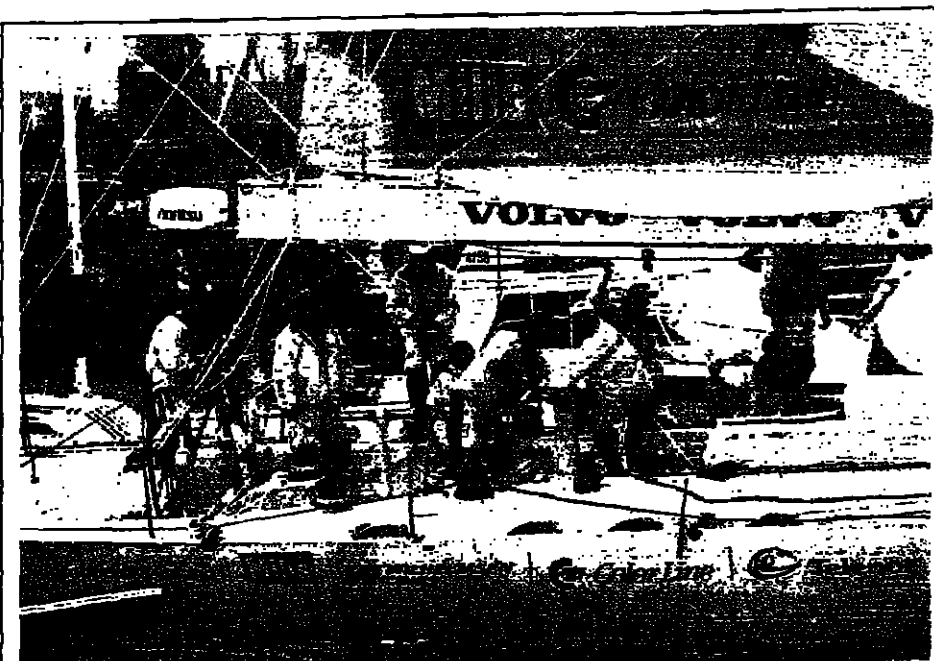
Iran leave for second leg in Australia

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian national squad left here for Melbourne Monday to prepare to play Australia for the last qualifying place for the 1998 World Cup.

The Iranians will have their leading scorer Karim Bagheri (18 goals in 14 matches) back for this second leg.

He was suspended for the home leg in Tehran on Saturday.

Iran only managed a 1-1 draw at home, giving Australia a vital away goal advantage for the second leg in Melbourne on November 29 as they compete for the final qualifying place for the 1998 World Cup.



Norwegian Innovation Kvaerner sails into Fremantle, Western Australia after the second leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race November 24 to seize overall lead in the race. Swedish Match, co-skipped by Gunnar Krantz and Erle Williams, won the second leg of the race to take the winner's flag some 192 miles ahead of Norwegian entry Innovation Kvaerner, skippered by Knut Frostad (Reuters photo)

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Chinese pro basketball league grounded

BEIJING (AFP) — The newest of China's two rival basketball leagues has run into funding difficulties, indefinitely postponing the launch of its 1997-98 season. While the Hilton Basketball League (HBL) kicked off its campaign on Sunday with six games, no teams suited up for planned weekend season openers of the CNBA — which stands for China National Basketball Alliance. "The 1997-98 CNBA, which was to be held from November 22, 1997, to March 16, 1998, is postponed because its sponsor, the Spectrum Company of Hong Kong, cannot provide required funds in time," the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission said. The CNBA — launched a year ago with a distinctly American flavour and more foreign players and coaches than the existing HBL — has been embattled from day one.

Bolton bar Fish from World team

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — English Premiership club Bolton Wanderers have barred South African defender Mark Fish from playing for the Rest of the World against Europe in Marseille on December 4. The World team includes one player from each non-European qualifier for the 1998 World Cup and the exhibition precedes the draw for the 32-nation tournament. A South African Football Association official said Bolton were concerned at the number of matches Fish was missing due to international call-ups and considered the Marseille match a friendly. The rules of football's world governing body FIFA require clubs to release players for seven internationals each year and Fish has played six with at least four more due in December.

Kenya win road relay

CHIBA (AFP) — The five-man Kenyan team took the men's title in the Chiba international marathon road relay race here Monday. Philip Mosima clocked the fastest time of 13 minutes 26 seconds in the second 5km leg, while John Gwako also timed the fastest of 34:55 in the fifth 12.195km (7.6 mile) leg, bringing the Kenyans home in a combined time of 1hr 59min 16sec: was their first victory in the competition. The men's race is run over five legs. The first and third are 10km, the second and fourth are 5km long, with a final leg of 12.195km. The women's race is run over six equal legs. Japan finished second in 2:00:55, followed by Australia in 2:01:21. South Africa fourth in 2:01:59. New Zealand fifth in 2:02:07 and Spain sixth in 2:02:30.

Chorkina and Ivankov take first honours

STUTTGART (AFP) — Russia's Olympic and World gymnastics champion Svetlana Chorkina and Ivan Ivankov of Belarus won the first round of the World Cup competition here on Sunday. The 18-year-old Chorkina took the overall prize thanks to wins in the floor and uneven bars categories while Ivankov, 22 and overall World champion, won in the rings and parallel bars events. Chinese gymnast Li Xiaopeng, part of the Chinese team that won the world team title, claimed a famous win in the floor exercise when he beat Russian Alexei Nemov, the reigning world champion in that event.

PARIS (AFP) — Juventus missed a golden opportunity to go top of the Italian Serie A on Sunday when they managed only a 2-2 draw at home to Parma but there was a change at the top in both Spain and France.

Barcelona continued their current disaster run when they lost 1-0 to Oviedo and were consequently knocked off the top of the Spanish table by traditional rivals Real Madrid who scored a 1-1 draw at Athletic Bilbao.

And unfashionable Metz went back to the top of the French first division with a 2-1 home win over Toulouse after Marseille and Paris St Germain both crashed to surprise defeats.

In Germany Wolfsburg inflicted the second defeat of the season on Bundesliga leaders Kaiserslautern

thanks to a penalty near the end allowing Bayern Munich to close the gap on their rivals to a single point. Meanwhile Feyenoord scored their first win under new coach Leo Beenhakker when they defeated Utrecht 3-1 in the Netherlands while two goals from new Lithuanian signing Edgaras Kankauskas helped Brugge maintain their unbeaten

record and a five point lead in the Belgian first division after a 2-2 draw away to Ekeren.

Brazilian striker Mario Jardel struck twice to give Portuguese champions Porto a hard-fought 2-1 away win over Braga. Porto were down to 10 men after 66 minutes when defender Rui Jorge was sent off.

Croatian striker Miladen Karoglan headed Braga's equaliser but Porto restored their advantage when Jardel took his tally to 10 goals this season.

Juventus, who had stood poised to go top of the Italian league on goal difference, had to settle for a share of the points against Parma and remained two points adrift of pacesetters Inter Milan who drew 2-2 with Inter Milan 24 hours earlier.

Marcello Lippi's champions pushed forward, but paid the price in the 34th minute. A long ball from Brazilian Ze Maria caught out Juventus' defence and Enrico Chiesa ran through to tuck the ball past goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi.

Juventus levelled in the 43rd minute when Alessandro Del Piero chested down Angelo Di Livio's

Juventus miss out but it's all change in Spain and France

cross and volleyed past Parma's teenage goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon from close range.

But two minutes later, another long ball — this time from the head of Dino Baggio — found Hernan Crespo and the Argentine's angled shot into the far corner was just too good for Peruzzi.

Parma looked set for all three points until the 83rd minute, when Nicola Amoroso rose above the melee to head Juventus' equaliser from a corner.

Despite failing to close the gap on Inter, Lippi said: "I'm very pleased with the match and the team's performance at the moment. We made a good start, but after their first goal it was a different game."

"We showed real character and determination: the team were convinced they didn't deserve to lose, and we nearly won in the end."

Spanish fans must have

wondered if it was worth turning out to watch the rest of the league programme on Sunday. With the first three places decided 24 hours earlier — Sunday's six matches produced just five goals.

Celta Vigo who went 1-0 clear just before half-time thanks to a goal from Mostovoi, were finally beaten 2-1 at home by Racing Santander who charged back with second-half goals from Chema and Bestevbastykh.

And a goal from Pier midway through the second-half clinched Real Zaragoza a 1-0 home win over Tenerife.

But Salamanca versus Real Sociedad, Compostella against Valladolid, and Merida versus Real Mallorca all ended goalless.

On Saturday Barcelona were knocked off the top of the first division for the first time this season and just

three weeks after opening up a seven-point lead, when they were beaten 1-0 at Oviedo.

The home side sealed their win with a 67th minute spot kick from Arentiniano Roberto Pompei while the visitors missed a penalty and finished with nine men after Josep Guardiola and Fernando Couto were sent off.

Barcelona, struggling to recapture their form and the confidence which disappeared completely when they crashed 4-0 at home against Kiev in the European Champions' League, have now lost their last three league games.

Saturday's result enabled Real to go top on goal difference after Fernando Morientes scored a late equaliser in a 1-1 draw at Athletic Bilbao — a result which prompted Bilbao's manager, former Paris St Germain supremo and French international Luis

Fernandez to declare that his side had been "robbed."

Both Real Madrid and Barcelona now have 28 points from 13 games, while Atletico Madrid three points back after Saturday's 3-1 home win over Valencia.

Metz went back to the top of the French first division on Friday with a 2-1 home win over Toulouse which left them one point clear of Marseille and two ahead of reigning champions Monaco.

Marseille, who had gone clear a week ago with a 4-0 thrashing of Auxerre, conceded pole position after their 2-0 loss at Strasbourg on Thursday to leave the door open for Metz, who have never won the championship.

Goals from Vladan Lukic in the 25th minute and a Robert Pires penalty eight minutes from the end cancelled out a Joel Tiehi goal for Toulouse, who had

Nicolas Pavot dismissed after barely half an hour.

Monaco ensured third spot in the standings with their humiliating 3-0 win against Paris Saint Germain on Thursday.

Bordeaux, who are in fifth place and one point behind PSG, squandered their chances and crashed 1-0 at promoted Chateauroux, for whom Nicolas Weber scored the only goal on 66 minutes. It was Bordeaux's first defeat since September 5.

The win took unheralded Chateauroux out of the bottom four, a point clear of 1995 champions Nantes, who crashed 3-0 at fellow strugglers Rennes.

Cannes remain bottom on 14 points but boosted their chances of survival by beating Lyon 1-0.

In Germany, Bayern made full use of Kaiserslautern's loss by steamrolling Duisburg 3-0, in spite of heavy fog which rendered visibility hopeless for both players and crowd.

Bayern took a 2-0 lead into the half-time break after headed goals by Thomas Helmer in the 10th and Ruggiero Rizzitelli in the 37th minutes. Rizzitelli and libero Lothar

Mathaeus celebrated successful comeback after long injury breaks although the latter had little to worry about in defence. Mehmet Scholl, one of Bayern's best, scored his side's third of the day in the 72nd minute and ensured that Duisburg keeper Thomas Gill was the busiest man on the pitch. Bayern are now breathing down the necks of Kaiserslautern, separated by just one point, and will clash head to head in two weeks time for a true test of who is the best in the Bundesliga. In between however Bayern must deal with an energy-sapping Champions League match Wednesday against Besiktas Istanbul in Turkey.

UEFA Cup champions Schalke, who host the Portuguese side Braga Tuesday, are fourth in the Bundesliga after their 2-0 defeat of Bayern's city rivals 1860. Second half goals from Martin Max in the 49th minute and Marc Wilmots in the 90th secured the win. It was Schalke's seventh home victory from their eight matches. They are level on 28 points with Stuttgart who demoralised Karlsruhe 3-0 Saturday.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144	CINEMA TEL: 634144	CINEMA TEL: 699238	CINEMA TEL: 677420	CINEMA TEL: 079 33430	CINEMA TEL: 079 33430	Risham Yanes Theatre TEL: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA "1"	PHILADELPHIA "2"	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	
	Chris O'Donnell & Jene Hackman ... in	Charles Grodin ... in	Nour Al Sharif & Layla Alwi... in	Rowan Atkinson... in	ABDOUN	ABDOUN	NOW ON DAILY
	THE CHAMBER	BEETHOVEN'S 2ND	AL MASEER (Arabic)	MR. BEAN	Nour Al Sharif & Layla Alwi... in	NOTHING TO LOSE	THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE
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Novotna outplays Pierce to win final

NEW YORK (AFP) — Jana Novotna, probably the most talented player never to have won a Grand Slam title, kept her notoriously fragile nerve and swept to a 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-3 victory over French opponent Mary Pierce in the WTA Championship final here Sunday.

The 29-year-old Czech, still best remembered for her tears when she threw away a third set lead to go down to defeat against Steffi Graf in the 1993 Wimbledon final, admitted after her victory: "Alas — this isn't a Grand Slam victory. But it's the next best thing."

Novotna, who finishes the season in second place in the rankings behind Martina Hingis and who also won the doubles title here with Lindsay Davenport of the United States, said she had used ice on her legs during the changeovers as a precaution.

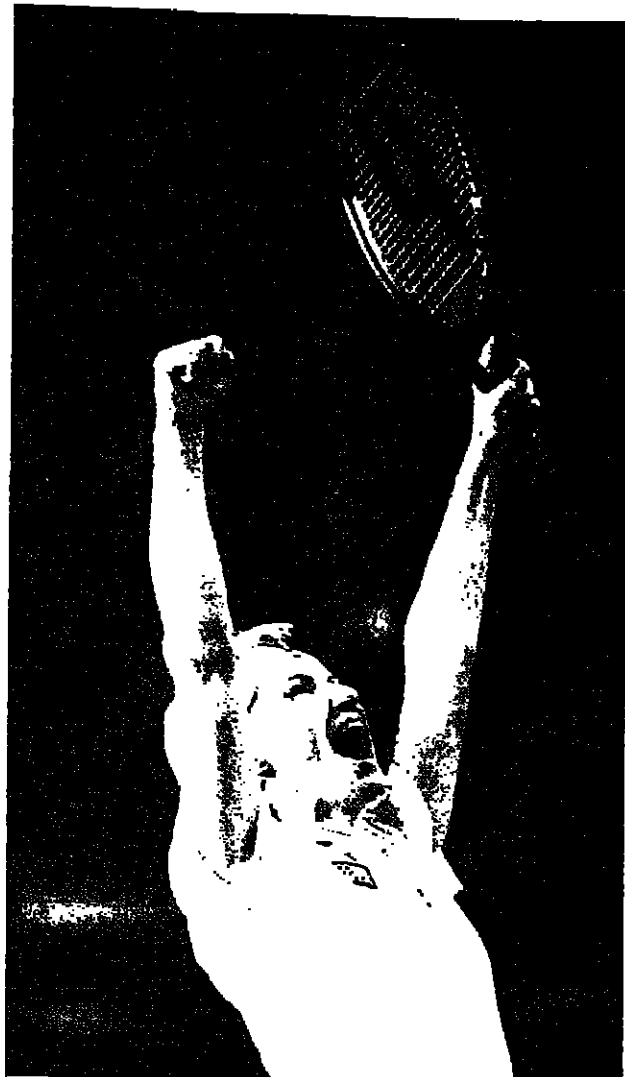
She had been worried, after all her matches in both events, that she would not have the stamina to play through the exceptional "best of five-sets" final.

Pierce, 23 in January and still looking to win a set after four defeats against the stylish Czech, came close to taking the first set.

Throwing caution to the wind she took a page out of Novotna's book and gave a superb demonstration of "serve-and-volley" tennis.

But after failing to convert two match points at 6-5 — she allowed Novotna to surge back.

The Czech jumped on a



Second-seed Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic celebrates her win over seventh-seed Mary Pierce of France in their final match in the Chase Championships of the Corel WTA Tour, at Madison Square Garden in New York. Novotna beat Pierce 7-6 6-2 6-3 to win the tournament (Reuters photo)

series of unforced errors by the 1995 Australian Open champion in the tie-break and then never looked back.

"Obviously winning that first set was crucial," said Novotna, a finalist at Wimbledon again this year. "Once I had won the tie-break I felt nothing could stop me."

Pierce lost her way in the 35-minute second-set and although she tried desperately to climb back into the match in the third, Novotna was clearly determined that she was not going to let her opponent off the hook.

In all she slammed down 15 aces to three by Pierce and kept her opponent under constant pressure with the depth of her groundstrokes.

"I tried hard in the third set — but nothing I did worked," said a clearly disappointed Pierce after her loss.

The French player, who defeated World No.1 Martina Hingis in the quarter-finals, added sadly: "It was just one of those days."

Novotna is the first player to win both the singles and doubles titles at the Championships since Martina Navratilova in 1986.

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Southwest Asian Games Weightlifter Khawaldeh earns Jordan's first medal

By Aileen Bannayan in Amman and Jordan Sports Media reporters in Tehran

JORDAN WON its first silver medal at the Southwest Asian Games when Ayeed Khawaldeh won the 54-kilogramme event as the weightlifting competition got under way in Tehran, Iran, Monday.

The win put Jordan on the medals table after it was the only country without one. Iran leads the table followed by Tajikistan.

Khawaldeh, who became the only Jordanian to win three medals at July's Pan-Arab Games said his win came about because of the dedicated efforts of his Chinese coach.

Khawaldeh, the only weightlifter representing Jordan had expressed his confidence before the event saying he hoped to be "the first to gain a gold medal."

"I pray that the rest of my teammates will also be successful in their respective competitions," added Khawaldeh.

The silver medal made up for otherwise disappointing results at the Games currently under way in Tehran with 12 countries compet-

ing in 17 sports events.

In other events Monday, Jordan lost its team tennis match to Turkmenistan.

Ahmad Al Hadeed who had beaten Turkmenistan in the men's singles again scored a 6-1, 6-1 win but the team manager, Mazen Hatamleh, registered as player in the team event because the event required at least two players lost the second match 6-0, 6-0 just as he had against Iran and Tajikistan.

Turkmenistan beat Jordan in the doubles 3-6, 6-4, 1-6. Team tennis could not have gone better with the team missing the country's current top tennis players, Faris and Luth Azzouni who were unable to join the team for personal reasons leaving Al Hadeed as the only player.

The boxing event also started Monday. Jordan's five boxers were all medal winners at the Pan-Arab Games.

However, things went the wrong way on the first day with Ayman Nadi losing 3-2 to Tajikistan in the 63-kilogramme, Kamal Abdul Majid losing 5-0 to Kyrgyzstan in the 60-kilogramme.

Khaldoun Abdul Hamid

and Basel Hindawi are assured of a medal after getting first round byes in the 57 and 81 kilogrammes.

Mohammad Abu Khadijeh faced the Turkmen champion in the heavy-weight 91-kilogramme category. The result was unavailable by press time.

In two days of competition Jordan was eliminated from the wrestling and badminton and the teams have already returned home.

The fencing competition gets under way Tuesday. Jordan's Amer Natour, a medalist at the Pan-Arab Games, will be competing without the guidance of his coach who had to return to Amman because he couldn't extend his leave from the University of Jordan.

The athletics competition also starts Tuesday with Jordan's Awwad Sreyes taking part in the 5,000 metres and Tareq Najjar in the discus.

Meanwhile, the organising committee seemed likely to keep the marathon for which only a handful of athletes have turned up.

They also decided to hold the 10,000 metres Wednesday. Awwad Sreyes will run that race as well.

Open to men's teams

only, the Nov. 19-28 Games have brought together athletes from Saudi Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Oman, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Yemen, Jordan and Iran.

Jordan's 37-member delegation comprises 19 athletes competing in 8 events: Athletics, boxing, fencing, badminton, tennis, wrestling, weightlifting and judo.

The games also include basketball, karate, table tennis, soccer, handball, taekwondo shooting and swimming.

Unable to cover air-fare, many Jordanian federations opted to stay away like equestrian, handball, basketball, volleyball, shooting and table tennis federations.

However, in an effort to increase the Kingdom's competitive chances, the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) sponsored excellent players by paying for medal-winning athletes at July's Pan-Arab Games, while the rest of the participating federations covered their own expenses.

Jordan took a total of 40 medals, including 10 gold, 8 silver and 22 bronze medals to finish fifth

among the 19 participating countries, gaining more gold medals in Beirut than in the past seven Pan-Arab Games altogether, and capping the best Jordanian participation since the event was first held in 1953.

Twelve medal-winners are included in the delegation including Fakrudin Fuad and Tareq Najjar (athletics), Mousa Khalaf (judo), Mohammad Abu Khadijeh, Ayman Nadi, Kamal Abdul Hamid, Khaldoun Abdul Hamid and Basel Hindawi (boxing), Abdul Hakim Abu Sneh and Ismail Sheikh (wrestling), Ayeed Khawaldeh (weightlifting), and Amer Natour (fencing).

Only three of the eight federations participating in the Tehran Games were impressive in Beirut.

The boxing, athletics and weightlifting teams earned five medals each while the wrestlers took four. Judo and fencing earned a medal each.

On the other hand, some of the declining federations had impressive results at the Pan-Arab Games like the gold medal-winning soccer team and table tennis who took two bronze medals.

Packers crush Cowboys

GREEN BAY (AFP) — Dorsey Levens ran wild as the Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers snapped an eight-game losing streak against Dallas with a 45-17 victory over the Cowboys on Sunday.

Levens rushed for a franchise-record 190 yards and Brett Favre passed for four touchdowns.

None of Green Bay's eight previous losses to Dallas was at Lambeau Field, where the Packers extended their franchise-record home winning streak to 22 games.

The win was the sixth in seven games for the Packers (9-3), who moved one game ahead of Minnesota and Tampa Bay in the NFC Central.

The Vikings were beaten 23-21 at the New York Jets and the Buccaneers lost 13-7 at Chicago.

The battle between the New York Giants and the Washington Redskins at the top of the NFC East ended in a 7-7 stalemate.

The Jets' win gave them sole possession of first place in the AFC East, while New England joined Miami in second place with a 27-24 victory over the Dolphins.

The San Francisco 49ers broke a franchise record by winning their 11th consecutive regular season game, 17-10 over San Diego.

The Detroit Lions managed to put two wins together thanks to another 200-yard game from Barry Sanders, his second of the season and fourth of his career.

Sanders rushed for a sea-

son-high 216 yards and two touchdowns in the 32-10 win over Indianapolis.

In other games, Atlanta beat New Orleans 20-13, Arizona downed Baltimore 16-13, Philadelphia edged Pittsburgh 23-20, Tennessee beat Buffalo 31-14, Cincinnati beat Jacksonville 31-26, Kansas City beat Seattle 19-14, and Carolina beat St. Louis 16-10.



New York Giants running back Tyrone Wheatley (28) is upended by a shoulder block by Washington Redskins' William Gaines (95) in their NFL game (Reuters photo)

McRae storms back out of fog

CHELTONHAM (AFP) — Colin McRae came fighting back after a foggy first stage of the RAC Rally's second leg had threatened to derail his victory bid.

The Scot, who needs to keep alive his world championship challenge, fought his way back to within 27sec of surprise leader Richard Burns of England after crashing in fog.

The Subaru driver, who led the season's finale by nine seconds overnight when the Rally moved into the Welsh forests, found himself tumbling down the leaderboard after an error on the day's first special stage.

First man on the road by virtue of his overall position in the rally, McRae expressed concern at the start of the section about

the fog shrouding the roads he was about to tackle.

The 29-year-old's fears proved well founded as he careered off the road and lost over a minute, dropping back to eighth place.

The two men immediately behind McRae — Juha Kankkunen and Didier Auriol — also encountered problems. But the next man along, Burns, produced a stunning performance to win the stage comfortably and surge into the overall lead.

McRae admitted he had made a mistake when struggling through the fog and said: "I couldn't see a thing and drove off a straight piece of road. I got back on again with only a little damage to the front of the car. But I'm really chuffed off."

It looked like potentially the end of McRae's title bid, especially because he had handed the initiative back to arch rival Tommi Makinen, of Finland.

If the Mitsubishi driver is to retain the world crown after this event he needs only to finish sixth, the position he held overnight, and the carnage in front of him on the Radnor stage enabled Makinen to move up to fourth.

Makinen was fifth, 2min 24sec down.

Seppo Harjanne, Makinen's co-driver said: "We just couldn't see anything in there. It's very foggy".

But McRae displayed his determination by hitting back with a vengeance on the next three specials.

NBA RESULTS			
Boston	90	Detroit	86
New York	104	Vancouver	84
Chicago	103	Sacramento	88
LA Lakers	119	LA Clippers	102

GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AA10543 QJ882 J103 45

Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?

Q. 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

A2 Q43 QJ1082 AAQ843

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

1A Pass 20 Pass 7

What do you bid now?

Q. 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

4Void QK976 QAK953 AK986

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

10 2A Pass 20 Pass

What action do you take?

Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

A63 CA94 QAK1064 AAK2

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

10 2A Pass 17

What do you bid now?

Q. 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

AA98 Q4 QAK73 AK5432

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What action do you take?

Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AJ632 Q64 Q432 AK552

Partner opens the bidding with two no trump (23-22 points). What do you respond?

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AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ELECTION

What is the election for?

The Constitutional Convention election is being held so Australian voters can choose 76 delegates to attend the Constitutional Convention. The election is being conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission as a voluntary postal ballot. The Constitutional Convention to be held in February 1998, will be a forum to discuss issues relating to whether or not Australia should become a republic. Delegates to the convention will not have the power to decide to change the current system — that decision is up to the Australian people and can only be made at a Referendum.

Who can vote?

A person is entitled to vote if their name is on the list of Australian electors which is taken from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll at close of rolls on 7 October, 1997. People overseas during the election period who wish to check if they are on the roll for this election can do so by calling 61-2-6271 4652. Further information is available on the AEC's internet home page at <http://www.aec.gov.au>

How to vote

Vote in person at the Australian Embassy in Amman, or request by telephone for voting material to be despatched to you.

Voting in Amman will be available up to 12:00 noon on Tuesday 2 December 1997

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Israel to offer modest troop withdrawals from West Bank

Albright warns Netanyahu if he fails to forge a credible plan for withdrawal, halt in settlements, he will be publicly held responsible for deadlock in peace process — press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Under strong U.S. pressure, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signalled a readiness Monday to approve a modest transfer of additional West Bank territory to Palestinian rule, sparking threats of rebellion from nationalists in his coalition government.

The prime minister's media advisor, David Bar-Ilan, confirmed press reports that Mr. Netanyahu had put forward a proposal to withdraw from an additional six to eight per cent of the West Bank, 70 per cent of which remains under full Israeli control.

"A withdrawal of this magnitude was mentioned by Netanyahu during his recent meeting in London with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright," Mr. Bar-Ilan told AFP.

Mr. Bar-Ilan said Mr. Netanyahu was also willing to "slow down" the expansion of Jewish settlements in disputed areas, but not to halt such building, even temporarily, as demanded by the U.S. and the Palestinians.

According to Israel Radio, Mr. Netanyahu's plan would

involve carrying out two of three further West Bank troop withdrawals Israel is committed to under U.S.-backed interim peace accords but has failed so far to implement.

In exchange, Mr. Netanyahu would demand that the Palestinian National Authority agree to hold accelerated negotiations on a permanent peace agreement and permit Israel to delay its third troop pullback until the end of the talks.

Israel already offered a first pullout in March from two per cent of the territory under its full control, but this was rejected by the Palestinians as insufficient.

Mr. Netanyahu discussed the new proposal late Sunday with Foreign Minister David Levy, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and was to hold more cabinet consultations later Monday, the radio said.

Israeli media reported this week that Ms. Albright warned Mr. Netanyahu at their Nov. 14 meeting that if he failed to come up soon with a credible plan for carrying out the withdrawals and

observing a "time out" in settlement building, she and U.S. President Bill Clinton would publicly hold him responsible for the deadlock in the peace process.

According to Israeli reports, Ms. Albright believes Israel should yield an additional 15 per cent of the West Bank in the next handover.

Palestinian officials immediately criticised the new Israeli plan as insufficient, but said they would be willing to discuss "serious" proposals for additional land transfers.

"Nothing which comes out of the prime minister's office has any reliability," Palestinian Cooperation Minister Nabil Sha'ath told AFP.

"Whenever Netanyahu is ready to put forward proposals which abide by our agreements, let him put them forward. He knows our address. Then we can discuss everything with precision before entering final status talks," he said.

Interim peace accords require Israel to withdraw by mid-1998 from all of the West Bank, except for Jewish

settlements and military zones. The future of the settlements and Jerusalem are to be tackled in the final peace agreement negotiations.

Ultra-nationalists in Mr. Netanyahu's fragile eight-party coalition, meanwhile, threatened to withdraw from government if he goes ahead with the plan.

"The survival of Netanyahu's regime depends on a series of red lines that he cannot pass," said Michael Kleiner, who leads a group of 17 coalition members of parliament known as the Greater Israel Front.

"A further withdrawal from the West Bank would mean the end of this government," said another member of the group, Zvi Hendel, from the National Religious Party. The ultra-nationalists have in the past enough votes to wipe out Mr. Netanyahu's six-seat majority in the 120-member parliament.

Mr. Netanyahu has until now insisted he would order no troop withdrawals until President Yasser Arafat showed greater determination to crack down on armed militants.



THE HEAVY TOLL OF SANCTIONS: A five-month-old Iraqi child suffering from malnutrition is cared for by his mother in the Qadissia Hospital, Baghdad, Monday. The child's mother is unable to breastfeed as she also suffers from malnutrition. Iraqi Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan said on Monday his country would resist any U.S. bid to prolong sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait (Reuters photo)

Israeli army demolishes homes of three Palestinians, shack of settler

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — The Israeli army demolished a shack erected by a Jewish settler and three homes under construction by Palestinians in the West Bank on Monday, an army spokesman told AFP.

The army tore down a "wooden shack" which Israelis put up outside their settlement of Bat Ayin, west of Bethlehem, and in which a single settler was living, said the spokesman, Peter Lerner.

"The structure was put up recently without a permit," Mr. Lerner said.

A settler spokesman said he was not aware of the demolition.

The demolition of settler homes by the army is a rare occurrence in the West Bank. The army demolished two settler homes outside Nablus in May, raising a storm of protests from settlers. The homes' occupants later

returned to the site and rebuilt the houses without opposition.

Meanwhile, bulldozers accompanied by Israeli border guards demolished three Palestinian houses in the villages of Khader, Firdis and Walaja around Bethlehem, said Mr. Lerner and the owners of the houses.

Residents of Walaja got into pushing and shoving matches with soldiers as the bulldozer tore down the unfinished home of Ahmed Youssef Uda in the village, but no major incident was reported, witnesses said.

Faisal Mubarak, owner of the Firdis home, told AFP that the house lay on the border between areas under Palestinian civilian control, known as "Area B," and a zone under full control of the Israeli army, the so-called "Area C."

"We appealed to the Civil Administration that we were building in Area B, but they ruled that it was Area C and therefore illegal," Mr. Mubarak said.

The Khader house was owned by a town resident named Abdul Salam Ahmad Abdul Salam.

The PNA issues permits to build homes in Area B, about 27 per cent of the West Bank. The army's civil administration is in charge of building in the 70 per cent of the West Bank categorised as Area C.

But Palestinians say the army almost never gives Palestinians permits to build in those areas, forcing them to build "illegally" with the expansion of their towns.

The army regularly demolishes homes it says were built without permits.

Egypt to demand extradition from Britain of convicted 'terrorists'

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has said he will demand the extradition from Britain and other countries of Islamist "terrorists" convicted here, the government daily Al Akhbar reported Monday.

"The terrorists receive protection from Britain, Afghanistan and several other countries," Mr. Mubarak was quoted as saying by Al Akhbar at the opening Sunday of an antiquities museum in the southern town of Aswan.

"These terrorists were convicted [by Egyptian tribunals] in trials of terrorism and accused of killing innocents," Mr. Mubarak said.

"We will ask these countries to hand over the terrorists living on their territory who were convicted [in Egypt]," Mr. Mubarak said.

Mr. Mubarak's statements came six days after Islamists killed 58 foreign tourists outside an ancient Pharaonic temple in the southern city of Luxor, including six British nationals.

"Terrorists are present and living on English territory and other countries where they collect funds and plan [attacks]," Mr. Mubarak said in Aswan.

He said if the world cooperated against Islamist activists the Luxor massacre would not have taken place,

"but the terrorists are protected by a country like England."

Britain vehemently rejected Mr. Mubarak's accusations.

"We're not protecting terrorists. We unreservedly condemn all forms of terrorism. We are committed to taking action against anyone who uses the United Kingdom as a base for terrorist activity elsewhere," a government spokesman said in London on Sunday.

One prominent Islamist, Yasser Serri, who faces a death sentence in Egypt for the 1993 attempted murder of then Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki, has lived in Britain since 1994.

Gunmen kill 3 in attack on aid group in Somalia; Italian hostages released

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Gunmen attacked the compound of an aid group north of Mogadishu, killing at least three people, wounding four others and kidnapping two Italians, a European Union official said Monday.

The official identified the relief organisation as the Italian agricultural aid agency CINS.

The kidnapped Italians were released after intervention by north Mogadishu faction leaders following the attack

Sunday night on the compound at Daganley village, 28 kilometres north of the Somali capital, said Ahmed Mahmud Washington, the head of the EU liaison office in Mogadishu.

They were on their way to Nairobi, he said Monday afternoon.

"They were released unconditionally and no ransom was paid or mentioned," he said.

"It is the responsibility of the Somalis to safeguard local and international expatriates serving human-

itarian agencies, otherwise it is difficult to help," he added.

The assailants arrived in battle wagons — pick-up trucks armed with heavy machine-guns and rocket-propelled grenades — from north Mogadishu. Unconfirmed reports put the death toll as high as eight, but only three people were initially confirmed dead.

Faction sources said the attack resulted from a dispute between clans.

U.N. prepares to boost oil-for-food deal in attempt to reduce suffering

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Spurred by mounting concern about the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, the United Nations is preparing to increase that country's allocations in an oil-for-food deal.

A draft report for U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan detailing the "unacceptably long delays" in the arrangement's implementation will land on his desk on Monday, aides say.

The draft is expected to be further amended after consultations with Benon Sevan, the U.N. official overseeing the seven-year-old sanctions programme.

Mr. Sevan left Baghdad on Sunday saying that more is needed to be done to satisfy the needs of the 22 million people of Iraq, as the Iraqi health ministry said that almost 7,000 Iraqis died last month of malnutrition-related diseases.

U.N. officials say malnutrition is widespread, particularly among children, who risk long-term damage, and the elderly.

The draft U.N. report does not mention specific increases in the oil-for-food deal, but

points out that current levels of aid are inadequate, U.N. officials say.

Iraq can export \$2 billion worth of oil every six months in return for food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies under a U.N. arrangement that came into force in December 1996.

"There is no doubt that the needs are not being met," Holbrook Arthur, the World Food Programme's representative in Baghdad, told Agence France Presse (AFP) on Sunday.

He said that Iraqi families, which have an average of seven members, were only receiving enough food in the U.N. ration basket each month to last between 16 and 23 days.

In addition to the inadequate supplies, the foodstuffs were only arriving fitfully. "People are resentful," Mr. Arthur said. "And they blame the situation on the United Nations."

A senior aide to Mr. Annan has warned that the United Nations is in danger of having its moral authority undermined because of the badly-functioning oil-for-food programme.

The draft report says that administrative delays in New York and Baghdad must be overcome to ensure the programme's effective implementation.

Mr. Arthur, a Ghanaian national, has travelled throughout Iraq to monitor food distribution and sees signs of malnutrition everywhere.

Even in the agricultural zones of southern Iraq, problems in the irrigation system such as a lack of machinery and spare parts, were aggravating the food problem, he said.

Mr. Arthur estimates that more than 99 per cent of the Iraqi population depend on the U.N. food rations for basic needs.

Any changes in the arrangement rest with the U.N. Security Council, and notably its five permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Mr. Annan is due to send his report to the Council on Friday.

Britain and the United States, the Council hard-liners on Iraq, have signalled that they would be willing to dis-

cuss raising the oil-for-food ceiling from two to three billion dollars for the next six-month period starting on Dec. 6.

A U.S. official has said that boosting the quantities would be a "little carrot" to Iraq in the ongoing crisis over U.N. arms inspections.

However, Iraq does not see it that way. Baghdad does not benefit from the oil export profits because those profits must be spent on the humanitarian supplies, compensation for the 1990 Kuwait invasion, and to pay for the U.N. arms inspection operations.

Iraqi ambassador, Nizar Hamdoon, said on Friday that it was "premature right now" to say whether Baghdad was interested in renewing the deal.

Iraq fears that by agreeing to increase the oil-for-food allocations, the United States will shut the door to the lifting of sanctions, which depend on Iraqi compliance with U.N. disarmament requirements.

"Obviously the main focus for Iraq continues to be the lifting of sanctions," Mr. Hamdoon said.

Ugandan army builds up on Sudan border

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Ugandan army is building up its forces along its border with Sudan to springboard attacks by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of John Garang, a Sudanese military official has said.

General Mohammad Abdullah Oweidah, chairman of the Sudanese parliament's defence committee, described the build up as "a means for backing the Garang movement in operations it is planning to launch," according to the Akhbar Al Youm newspaper on Monday.

Uganda's state-owned New Vision newspaper said Saturday the country is deploying additional troops along its border with Sudan in a bid to prevent infiltration by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which Kampala says has bases in southern Sudan.

Troops are being deployed in the north with additional orders to search and destroy rebel hideouts, and to provide security to displaced people in the region, the paper said.

38 go on trial in France accused of backing Algerian extremist network

PARIS (AFP) — Thirty-eight people went on trial here on Monday accused of being part of a network providing logistical support to extremist Algerian Islamist militants.

The 38 allegedly belonged to or supported a network based in Chasse-sur-Rhone near Lyon, which was discovered and dismantled during a manhunt that followed a series of bomb attacks in France in 1995.

Three other accused are still at large and will be tried in absentia.

These three include Ali Touchent, alias "Tarek," a 30-year-old Algerian suspected of heading the network which provided logistical support to the terrorist Islamic Armed Group (GIA), which has claimed a string of murders of foreigners in Algeria and bomb attacks in France.

Twelve of those being tried are still in custody, the remainder were released on bail.

Most of the accused are young and from the Lyon region. Sixteen are Algerian nationals and 18 are second-generation immigrants with French nationality. Six have

dual Algerian-French citizenship.

The network might have continued to operate undetected had it not been for a massive police operation launched after a bomb explosion on July 25, 1995 in a Paris subway station which left eight people dead and wounded 116.

The investigation had made little progress until Aug. 26, when a cooking gas cylinder packed with explosives was found north of Lyon on the railway line used by the TGV high-speed train between Lyon and Paris. The bomb had been supposed to blow up and derail the TGV but its detonator failed to function.

The device put investigators on the track of Islamist activists based in the Lyon area and on Aug. 31, Joseph Jaime, 37, and David Vallat, 26, two French converts to Islam, were arrested in Chasse-sur-Rhone.

At their homes, police seized firearms, ammunition, homemade detonators, Islamist propaganda material and address books.

It quickly became clear that Jaime and Vallat, who

became acquainted while undergoing military training in Afghanistan, had nothing to do with the bomb found on the railway.

But analysis of the documents seized and of telephone calls made by the two men, enabled investigators to piece together information about the network and about its links with other GIA-support groups in Belgium, Germany, Britain and Italy. Dozens of arrests followed.

The accused face ten-year jail terms for terrorist-related criminal conspiracy. The trial is expected to last until next Dec. 10.

None of the defendants has been implicated in actual terrorist operations in France, even though the Lyon network was part of a wider infrastructure set up at national level by Ali Touchent, some of whose members did take part in terrorist attacks.

One of them, Khaled Kelkal, a young Islamist from the Lyon region suspected of planning the aborted rail bomb attack, was shot down and killed by security forces on Sept. 29, 1995.

Humphrey the cat missing

LONDON (AFP) — A Conservative Party MP and animal lover, has expressed serious concern about the fate of Humphrey, the resident cat at 10 Downing Street until he disappeared two weeks ago. Alan Clark said in Monday's Daily Telegraph that he suspected that Humphrey was in bad health had been invented to conceal the fact that Cherie Blair, the wife of Prime Minister Tony Blair, was allergic to cats. He called on the government to prove that Humphrey was alive. "Humphrey is now a missing person," said Clark who said he feared Mrs. Blair might have had the cat put down.

Talking down and dirty sells women's magazines

LONDON (AFP) — The recipe for a best-selling women's magazine in Britain is "talk down and talk dirty," according to members of a respected independent think tank, the Social Affairs Unit. The main theme of most women's magazines on sale in Britain today was sex, sex and a bit of fashion on the side. The unit accused what it describes as "Magazine Woman" — such as Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire, Elle, and Company — of patronising their readers with a constant diet of sex, fashion and articles on how to get in and out of serious relationships. They contained the full range of "sex, trivia and self-indulgence."

Joop accuses rivals of sending 'witches' down the catwalk

BONN (AFP) — German couturier Wolfgang Joop lambasted young rivals in the fashion world, particularly the Britons John Galiano, Alexander McQueen, Hussein Chalayan and Stella McCartney, accusing them of recycling old ideas. In a free-flowing attack, published in the weekly Der Spiegel, Joop was strongly critical of the fashion shows of the likes of Paul McCartney's daughter, "in which, instead of beautiful women, we saw grotesque witches, shrews and absurd monsters." According to Joop, McQueen became famous solely by sending "models which looked like rape victims, covered in blood" walking along the cat-walk.

Hong Kong men told not to eat too many oysters

HONG KONG (R) — Despite the oyster's reputation as an appetiser for a romantic evening, Hong Kong men with fertility problems are being warned against eating too much seafood due to high levels of mercury. Two meals of fish or shellfish per week should be the limit, specialists said, after tests showed mercury was the dominant toxic metal in seafood sold in Hong Kong, the South China Morning Post reported on Sunday. Eating too much seafood was unwise for both fertility and general health, said Dr. Clement Leung of the Hong Kong sanatorium and hospital, who is conducting a study on mercury in seafood. "I believe it is a significant association," Leung told the paper. "Shark products, tuna and swordfish — these three fish are very high in mercury."